ORIGINAL PLAYS
BY
W. S. GILBERT

SECOND SERIES

3/6

2/12

19/4/22

W. S. GILBERT'S PLAYS

ORIGINAL PLAYS by W. S. GILBERT. In Four Series. ST. MARTIN'S LIBRARY EDITION, pott 8vo, cloth, 3*s.* 6*d.* net each; leather, gilt top, 5*s.* net each.

The FIRST SERIES contains: The Wicked World—Pygmalion and Galatea—Charity—The Princess—The Palace of Truth—Trial by Jury—Iolanthe.

The SECOND SERIES: Broken Hearts—Engaged—Sweethearts—Gretchen—Dan'l Druce—Tom Cobb—H.M.S. 'Pinafore'—The Sorcerer—The Pirates of Penzance.

The THIRD SERIES: Comedy and Tragedy—Foggerty's Fairy—Rosencrantz and Guildenstern—Patience—Princess Ida—The Mikado—Ruddigore—The Yeomen of the Guard—The Gondoliers—The Mountebanks—Utopia, Limited.

The FOURTH SERIES: The Fairy's Dilemma—The Grand Duke—His Excellency—"Haste to the Wedding"—Fallen Fairies—The Gentleman in Black—Brantinghame Hall—Creatures of Impulse—Randall's Thumb—The Fortune-Hunter—Thespis—The Hooligan—Trying a Dramatist.

ORIGINAL PLAYS

ORIGINAL PLAYS

BY

W. S. GILBERT

SECOND SERIES

CONTAINING

BROKEN HEARTS, ENGAGED, SWEETHEARTS
DAN'L DRUCE, GRETCHEN, TOM COBB
THE SORCERER, H.M.S. PINAFORE
THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS
1922

PRINTED IN ENGLAND BY
WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
BECCLES.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Broken Hearts	1
Engaged	39
Sweethearts	87
Dan'l Druce, Blacksmith	109
Gretchen	151
Tom Cobb; or, Fortune's Toy	203
The Sorcerer	239
H.M.S. Pinafore; or, The Lass that loved a Sailor	271
The Pirates of Penzance; or, The Slave of Duty	303

BROKEN HEARTS.

AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL FAIRY PLAY,

IN THREE ACTS.

First produced at the Royal Court Theatre, under the management of MR. HARE, *Thursday, 9th December,* 1875.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Prince Florian	Mr. W. H. Kendal.
Mousta (*a deformed Dwarf*)	Mr. Anson.
The Lady Hilda	Miss M. Robertson. (Mrs. Kendal.)
The Lady Vavir (*her Sister*)	Miss Hollingshead.
The Lady Melusine	Miss Plowden.
The Lady Amanthis	Miss Rorke.

SCENE: THE ISLAND OF BROKEN HEARTS.

The action of the piece takes place within twenty-four hours.

Costumes—1300–1350.

BROKEN HEARTS.

ACT I.

SCENE: *A tropical landscape. In the distance, a calm sea. A natural fountain—a mere thread of water—falls over a rock into a natural basin. An old sun-dial formed of the upper part of a broken pillar, round the shaft of which some creeping flowers are trained, stands on a small mound. The time is within half an hour of sunset.*

MOUSTA, *a deformed, ill-favoured dwarf, hump-backed and one-eyed, is discovered seated, reading a small black-letter volume.*

Mous. (*reads*). "*To move a mountain.*" That will serve me not,
Unless, indeed, 'twill teach me how to lift
This cursed mountain from my crippled back!
"*To make old young.*" Humph! I'm but forty-two—
But still, I'll mark that page—the day will come
When I shall find it useful. Ha! what's this?
"*To make the crooked straight; to heal the halt;*
And clothe unsightly forms with comeliness."
At last! At last!

Enter VAVIR, *who listens in amazement.*

(*Reads*) "*Take scammony and rue,*
With henbane gathered in a fat churchyard—
Pound in a mortar with three drops of blood,
Drawn from a serpent's tail at dead of night."
Yes, yes, that's plain enough! (*reads*) "*Take pigeon's egg*
Wrapped in the skin of a beheaded toad,
And then—" (*sees* VAVIR) Who's there?

Vav. (*astonished*). Why, Mousta?
Mous. Pardon me,
I'm at my book. I did not hear thy step.
Vav. Thy book hath lines both strange and terrible:
Why Mousta, this is arrant sorcery!
How camest thou with such a fearful thing?
Mous. (*whispering*). An unseen spirit brought it to me
—Ay,
Brought it to *me*. An hour or so ago
I saw a distant boat make for our shores,
The wind was on her bow—she tacked as though
Handled by one well-skilled in such small craft.
Well—on she came—and I awaited her,
Armed with a boat-hook. When within fair hail,
"Sheer off!" I cried; "No stranger touches here!"
But, heedless of my hail, she kept her course,
And, when within a bow-shot of the beach,
Down came her sail, and in she ran to shore!
Vav. (*alarmed*). Whom did she carry, Mousta?
Mous. Not a soul!
The boat was tenantless! Some unseen power
Had guided her! I overhauled the craft
To find some sign of human agency,
And found—this book.
Vav. (*shrinking from it*). It is unholy lore!
Oh, burn it, Mousta!
Mous. Burn it? No, not I!
See what I am—dwarfed, twisted, and deformed!
I have a fancy to be tall and straight—
This volume teaches me to have my will.
My only eyeball flashes from its pit
Like a red snake trapped in a sunken snare—
I do not like my eye. As I've but one,
I'd have it large and bright. *This teaches me*
To make it so. My mouth is coarsely cut—
I like a tempting mouth—a mouth that smiles—
A mouth that's smiled upon. *This teaches me*
To make it so. I will not burn this book!

The Lady Hilda *has entered during the last line.*

Hil. And what would'st *thou* with beauty?
Mous. What would I?
Why, lady, look around; the isle is fair:
Its feathery palms that tower towards the sky,

Its prattling brooks that trickle to the sea,
Its hills and dales, its sea and sky—are fair:
The beasts that dwell upon it, and the birds
That fly above it—even they are fair:
And, beyond all, the ladies who have made
This isle their chosen home are very fair!
And what am I? Why, lady, look at me!
I am the one foul blot upon its face:
I am the one misshapen twisted thing
In this assemblage of rare loveliness:
I am the one accursed discord in
This choir of universal harmony!
Is this, think you, a proud pre-eminence?
Or, rather, is it not a red-hot brand
That stamps its damning impress on one's heart,
And changes man to devil before his time!
(*Sadly.*) Ah! you are mocking me!
Hil. (*kindly*). I mock thee not.
We maidens all (save one) have dearly loved,
And those we loved have died. We, broken hearts,
Knit by the sympathy of kindred woe,
Have sought this isle far from the ken of man;
And having loved, and having lost our loves,
Stand pledged to love no living thing again.
Thou art our trusted servant and our friend;
The only man of all the world of men
Whom we admit upon our virgin shores.
We know thee, and we trust thee, Mousta—Come,
This thought might soften harder hearts than thine!
Mous. (*angrily*). And why choose me alone of all mankind
To serve you in your island loneliness?
Because my limbs, though crooked, are strongly framed?
Bah, there are tall straight men as strong as I.
Because my heart goes with my fealty?
Why half *my* wage would buy the heart and soul
Of twenty well-proportioned servitors.
Because by reason of my face and form
I do not count as man? Yes! I'm an ape!
A crippled, crumpled, devil-faced baboon,
Who claims a place amid this loveliness
By title of his sheer deformity!
Now, monkey though I be, I am a man
In all but face and form—I've a man's heart,

A man's desire to love—and to be loved—(HILDA *seems amused.*)
Ay, you may laugh—but those who seek to laugh
May find, methinks, more fitting merriment
In such mad love as deals with sun-dials,
Trees, rocks, and fountains, and such baby game.
My love at least is human in its aim.
It's well you should know this—be on your guard!
[*Exit* MOUSTA.

Hil. In truth, the love that Mousta laughs at tells
How strangely ordered is a woman's heart!
Dost thou remember how, when first we came
To this fair isle, I said, in thoughtless jest,
"As woman's heart must love, and we are women,
So let us choose our loves"—then, looking round,
"This running fountain shall be mine," I cried,
And, kneeling by the brink, then sealed the vow
As all such vows are sealed 'twixt men and women—
And thou, poor child, pleased with the jest, replied,
"I take this dial to be my love for life!"
Vavir, we little thought that in those words
We pledged ourselves to an abiding love
That rivals in its pure intensity
The love that we had banished from our hearts!
Yet so it is. We have so dwelt upon
This idle fancy—keeping it alive
With songs and sighs and vows of constancy,
That we have tricked ourselves into a love
Akin to that which we had all forsworn.
I love this little fountain as my life!

Vav. To me my dial is more, far more, than life;
It is the chronicle of the World's life,
Written by Heaven's own hand. As, rapt in thought,
I watch its silent solemn shadow creep
From hour to hour, and so from day to day,
True as the Sun itself—an awful record
Of Heaven's most perfect and most glorious order—
My love is lost in reverential awe.
Oh I have chosen well in choosing this!
It is a holy thing, that bears a warrant,
Sent from the Source of Life, to tell the Earth
That even Time is hastening to its end!
What is mere world-love to such love as this?

Hil. And yet *thou* hast no cause to shun world-love.

When my great sorrow came and I withdrew
To this lone isle with other broken hearts,
Thou, heart-whole and untouched by love of Man,
Yet gavest up the world and all it holds
To bide with me.

Vav. I do not love the world.
My darling sister found her sorrow there—
The world is naught to me. This tiny isle,
But half a league in girth holds all *I* love.
My world is where thou art—there let me stay
For the few months that yet remain to me!
I think my time on earth will be but brief.

Hil. Hush, hush, Vavir. I will not hear these things.

Vav. My life has been a very happy life,
So free from pain and sorrow of its own
That, but that I have shared my sister's grief,
I had not known what pain and sorrow are—
Yet even this calm rest—this changeless peace,
Saps my poor fragile fabric day by day,
And the first shaft that sorrow aims at it,
May shake its puny structure to the ground!

Hil. Why, what sad silly fancy's this, Vavir?
Thou hast no pain, my child?

Vav. No pain, indeed;
But a calm happiness so strangely still,
It comes not of this world. I am to die
Ere very long. Pray Heaven I be prepared!

Hil. It's well for me and well for both of us
I do not share these foolish fantasies!
Why, silly child, believest thou that Time
Will see the fruit that ripens on those cheeks,
And note the dainty banquet of those lips,
And not preserve such rich and radiant fare,
For his own feasting in his own good time?
Trust the old Epicure!

[*Exeunt* HILDA *and* VAVIR *together.*

Enter FLORIAN. *He comes down, looking around him in admiration.*

Flor. All men who say I'm five-and-twenty, lie.
I was born but to-day! An hour ago!
Yes—this must be the World. The distant land

In which I've passed so many years, and which
I, in my puppy-blindness, called "The World,"
Is but its antechamber.

Enter MOUSTA (*with book*).

Born to-day,
And by a process which is new to me,
My faculties are scarcely wide awake,
But if my memory serves me faithfully,
This twisted thing and I have met before.
Mous. The ladies are at supper. Now's my time
To master, undisturbed by curious eyes,
The ghostly secrets of my spirit book!
Where was I? Oh! (*reads*) "*Take scammony and rue,*
With henbane gathered—"
Flor. (*coming behind and taking book from him*). Pardon me—that's mine.
Mous. Oh, Heaven and Earth—a Man! Thou hardy fool,
What dost thou on this isle? (*Draws knife.*) Come, answer me.
Flor. Give me that knife. (*Twists it out of his hand.*) That's well! Now, what's your will?
Mous. Go—get thee hence at once.
Flor. No, not just yet.
This Paradise—if Rumour tells the truth—
Is ruled by six fair ladies. I prefer
To take my sailing orders from *their* lips.
Mous. Their lips are mine!
Flor. Then you're a lucky dog!
Mous. I am their mouthpiece. By their solemn rules
No man may set his foot upon these shores.
Those rules thy hardihood hath set at naught.
How camest thou, and when?
Flor. I am a Prince,
Prince Florian of Spain. I landed here
From yonder boat—about an hour ago.
Mous. Liar! The boat was empty!
Flor. No, not quite.
I was on board.
Mous. (*puzzled*). But I was on the beach—
Flor. I know you were—with boat-hook in your hand
To thrust her off. You hailed me angrily:

I had no time to stop and parley then,
So, in the hope that Fate would furnish me
With some more fitting opportunity
To offer you my best apologies,
I kept her head to land, and jumped ashore.
Those best apologies I offer now.
Mous. (*alarmed*). If you'll believe me, sir, I saw you not!
Flor. I quite believe you, for I have the power
To make myself invisible at will,
And, having such a power, you'll see at once
That force will serve you nothing.
Mous. (*amazed*). Say you true?
Flor. Undoubtedly. I've but to wind this veil
(*producing a grey gauze veil with gold tassels*)
About my head, and I'm invisible,
And so remain till I remove it.
Mous. Why,
This is a priceless Talisman, indeed!
Invisible! I'd give one half my life
To be invisible for half-a-day!
Flor. Indeed? And why?
Mous. There is no living thing
But seeks a mate—What birds and beasts may do
Mousta may seek to do—*I* want to mate!
And whom d'ye think I want? Some kitchen-wench?
One-eyed, hump-backed, and twisted like myself?
I want the purest, fairest form on earth!
Flor. Upon my word, you aim full high!
Mous. I do!
Why not? Suppose I loved a kitchen-wench,
And told her so?
Flor. A decent kitchen-wench
Would soundly box your ears!
Mous. You're right—She would;
My Lady can't do more. As I *must* fail
At least I'll fail for game worth failing for!
As yet I've breathed no word—were I unseen
I could take heart of grace and tell my love!
Flor. (*laughing*). What would you say?
Mous. Ay, ay, you laugh at me;
But I've a wily tongue, and I can woo
Like an Adonis—when I'm in the dark!
A blind girl loved me once—a fair young girl
With gentle face and gentle heart—but blind!

Flor. I'll swear she was!
Mous. (*gently*). Ah, mock her not—she died!
Flor. Well, peace be with her—Find me some safe spot,
Where I can pass the night—I'll pay you well.
Mous. Ha! ha!
Flor. Why do you laugh?
Mous. Had I your power
To make myself invisible at will,
I should take up my quarters in the castle
Where all the ladies dwell!
Flor. I'm sure you would,
Unfortunately I'm a gentleman,
And so that course is closed to me—
Mous. Of course!
I did but jest—I beg your pardon, sir.
(*Aside.*) If I could get that veil for one short hour—
Eh, but I've drugs to lull a man to sleep!
If I can tempt this squeamish popinjay
To trust himself to me, the thing is done!
(*Aloud*). I've a poor cottage—it is close at hand,
Though humble, it is clean and weather-tight:
It will afford you shelter. Then for food
I've some dried fish and eggs and oaten bread
Quite at your service.
Flor. Good.
Mous. (*quickly*). But hide yourself,
Some one approaches!
[FLORIAN *covers his head with veil as* VAVIR *enters with flowers.*
Flor. (*aside to* MOUSTA). Who is this fair maid?
Mous. (*aside*). Lady Vavir. She always comes at eve
To bid "good night" to this old sun-dial!
Keep your ears open, and I'll warrant you
Yours eyes will open too! (*Aloud.*) Lady Vavir,
I bid you fair good night.
Vav. Good night to you. [*Exit* MOUS
Flor. In truth a fair young girl!
Vav. Dear sun-dial
Dost know what day this is?
Flor. (*aside*). He ought to know,
It comes within the radius of his calling!
Vav. A year to-day, and we two were betrothed—
One happy, happy year!
Flor. (*aside*). Betrothed, i' faith!

They're lovers, then!

Vav. I must devise some gift
To mark this happy day. What shall it be?
I'll weave a bower of rose and eglantine
To place above thy head at eventide,
When the full moon's abroad. No foolish moon
Shall cast false shadows on thy sleeping face,
Or make thee mutter incoherent tales
Of hours long since gone by or yet to come.
No madcap moon shall mar thy nightly rest,
Or in the mischief of half-witted glee
Awake thy sleeping hours before their time.

Flor. (*aside*). He doesn't answer—the insensate dolt!—
And yet such words are warm enough to rouse
A tombstone into life!

Vav. I've brought thee flowers
To deck thy stem. They live their little life,
And then they die; but others follow them—
And thou shalt have thy garland day by day
While I am here to weave it for thee?

Flor. (*aside*). Well,
This is the oddest wooing! On my word,
A thousand pities that the lady's love
Should be lopsided! Come, arouse thee, dial—
Be eloquent with thanks! I've half a mind
To thank her for thee, in the interests
Of all true horologes!

Vav. I'm content
To sit and deck thee, silent though thou art.
And yet I would thou hadst the gift of speech
For one brief second—time enough to say,
"Vavir, I love thee with my whole, whole heart!"

Flor. (*aloud*). "Vavir, I love thee with my whole, whole heart!"

Vav. (*recoiling, horrified*). Who spake?

Flor. 'Twas I—thy dial!

Vav. Oh, terrible!
What shall I do?

Flor. Fair lady—have no fear.

Vav. "*Fair* lady"—It's a man! My sisters, help!
I am betrayed!

Flor. Have patience for a while—

Vav. Who and what art thou?—speak!

Flor. (*aside*). What shall I say?

(*Aloud.*) I am a poor, long-suffering, mortal man,
Whom in the stony substance of thy dial,
A cruel magician holds incarcerate!
Vav. Oh, marvellous!
Flor. And very pitiful!
Vav. Aye, pitiful indeed, poor prisoned soul!
(*advancing.*)
Flor. "There shalt thou lie," said he, "till some pure maid
Shall have been constant to thine unseen self
A twelvemonth and a day." That maid art thou!
Vav. Alas! poor man, I fain would set thee free.
Yet I have loved not thee, but this thy tomb!
Flor. Thou canst not separate me from my tomb
Except by loving me. In loving it
Thou lovest me who am bound up with it;
And in so loving me—provided that
Thy love, a twelvemonth old, lasts one day more—
Thou givest me my freedom and my life!
If thou hast loved thy dial thou hast loved me.
Vav. Yes, I have loved my dial!
Flor. But earnestly—
With a surpassing love?
Vav. I cannot say—
I am ill-versed in the degrees of love.
Judge for thyself—When I am weak and ill
My sisters place my couch beside my dial
That I may lay my poor thin hand on it:
It gives me life and strength—I know not why.
Judge for thyself—
When the black winter comes my sisters weep
To see me weep my darling's brief day-life;
And when the bright, long summer days return
They join my joy—because with Light comes Hope,
And Hope is Life—and they would have me live!
Judge for thyself—
At dawn of day I seek my dial alone,
To watch its daily waking into life;
At set of sun I come to it again,
To kiss "good night" upon its fading shade:
Then, with a prayer that I may lay to heart
The lesson of its silent eloquence,
I seek my bed. So speeds my little life.
If this be love, then have I loved indeed!
Judge for thyself. (*Rises.*)

Enter MELUSINE (*a small hand-mirror hangs from her waist*).

Mel. Vavir, the evening dews are falling fast;
The night air teems with damp. So, come, dear love,
Return at once with me.
Vav. Oh, Melusine,
I have a secret. (*Aside to dial.*) May I tell it?
Flor. (*whispering*). Yes.
Mel. A secret?
Vav. Ay, a wondrous secret, too!
My sun-dial hath ears to hear withal—
And eyes to see withal—and a sweet voice,
A gentle, tender voice to woo withal!
Mel. Oh, marvellous! Oh, fortunate Vavir!
To woo—and to be woo'd—and, being woo'd,
To keep her vow intact! I'd give the world
If my loved mirror were endowed with speech!
Flor. Have then thy wish, fair lady!
Mel. Why, who spake?
Vav. Thy mirror spake!
Mel. Oh, day of wonderment!
Who gave thee speech? Art thou enchanted too?
Flor. Ay, that in truth I am, as all must be
On whom those eyes are turned so lovingly!
Mel. A very polished mirror!
Flor. As for that,
We mirrors are as other gallants are—
Teeming with compliment to fair young maids—
But apt to be extremely curt and rude
With old and wrinkled faces. On the whole
We are good gallants as good gallants go!
Mel. And dost thou love me?
Flor. Love thee, gentle maid?
Have I not laughed with thee, and wept with thee,
And ever framed my face in sympathy
With all the changes of thy varying moods?
Hast thou e'er cast thine eyes upon my face
And found me light of heart when thou wast sad?
Or sad when thou wast light of heart?
Mel. No! no!
Most wonderful!
Flor. And yet not wonderful!
I am but one of many. This fair isle

Teems with poor prisoned souls! There's not a tree—
There's not a rock, a brook, a shrub, a stone,
But holds some captive spirit who awaits
The unsought love that is to set him free!

Mel. (*to* VAVIR). We'll keep this secret safely to ourselves.
If it should get abroad, this little isle
Will barely hold the maidens who will come,
Prepared to pass the spring-time of their lives
In setting free these captives! Come, Vavir,
And we will warn our sisters.

Vav. Fare thee well,
Beloved dial: I go to dream of thee,
Dream thou of me! God send thee Sun. Good night!

[*Exeunt* VAVIR *and* MELUSINE.

Flor. Two maids, at once bewitching—and bewitched!
One loves a mirror—well, that's not so strange,
Though she'll grow angry with it ten years hence!
The other loves a dial—a cold stern fact
That surely marks the deadly flight of time!
Wonders will never cease! let none despair—
Old Chronos, enemy of womankind,
Has found a pretty sweetheart, after all!

Enter LADY HILDA, *singing and playing on mandolin.*

Far from sin—far from sorrow
Let me stay—let me stay!
From the fear of to-morrow
Far away—far away!
I am weary and shaken,
Let me stay—let me stay,
Till in death I awaken
Far away—far away!

[*Towards the close of the song, she sinks on her knees as a ray of moonlight falls on her.* FLORIAN *has watched her eagerly during the song, with every symptom of the profoundest admiration.*

Flor. Oh, Heaven enlighten me—is this fair thing
A soul of Earth—a being, born of woman,
Conscious of sin and destined to decay?
Oh, Good and Ill, how share ye such a spoil!

Can this pure form, instinct with Heaven's own light,
Clothed in the majesty of innocence,
Have aught in common with the vapid toy
We break and cast aside? Oh, sordid Earth,
Praise Heaven that leaves this angel yet unclaimed.
Oh, heart of mine—oh, wilful, wayward heart,
Bow down in homage—thou art caught and caged!

[*During these lines* HILDA, *seated by the fountain, has been playing with its water, and kissing her wet hands.*

Hil. The sun has set—the fierce hot thirsty sun
Who, like a greedy vampire as he is,
Drinks my love's life-blood till it pines away,
And dwindles to a thread. The moon's abroad—
She is not jealous of my fountain love;
She sheds her gentle light upon our tryst
And decks my love with diamonds of her own!

Flor. (*aside*). Poor, senseless fount! To have thy home in Heaven
And not to know it!

Hil. Shall I tell thee how
I came to give my poor bruised heart to thee?
Or art thou of those churlish lovers who
Can brook no love that is not born of them?
Why, then, I am unworthy in thine eyes,
For I have loved, as women love but once!
He was a prince—a brave, God-fearing knight—
The very pink and bloom of Chivalry,
Proud as a war-horse—fair as the dawn of day—
Staunch as a Woman—tender as a Man!
He knew not that I loved him. Who was I
That he should mark the flushing of *my* face,
Amid a thousand maids whose stricken hearts
Danced to their lips, as he, my prince, rode by?
One sullen winter day—dark as his doom,
He left his home to seek a distant land.
A weary while I wept—months passed away,
And yet no tidings came. Then tales were told
Of ships o'erwhelmed by boisterous wintry seas;
And rough men prayed, and maidens wept aloud,
For he was loved of all! Then came the news;
At first in shuddering whispers, one by one—
Then babbled by ten thousand clamorous tongues—

The cold fierce sea had robbed me of my love!
My star—my light—my life—my Florian!
Flor. (*aside*). Oh, senseless dullard—to have turned away
From Heaven's own threshold at thine own free will!
Hil. I wept no more.
Tears are the balm of sorrow—not of woe.
I fled my home—
A gentle sister whose poor little life
Lives on the love I bear it, fled with me;
So, hand in hand, we wandered through the world
Till, in this haven of pure peace and rest,
We found safe sanctuary from our woe.
Flor. (*aloud*). Who would not die to be so mourned by thee?
[HILDA *expresses alarm and intense surprise.*
Fear nothing. I who speak am but a voice—
The murmur of the waters, shaped to words
By the all-potent alchemy of Love!
Hil. Oh, foolish maid—this is some madcap dream!
Flor. No dream indeed—or if it be, dream on!
Hil. Canst thou then hear the words I speak to thee?
Flor. Ay, that I can—and every word I hear
Adds fuel to my love!
Hil. Oh, wonderful!
Hast thou the power to love?
Flor. Indeed I have!
Hil. And is thy love akin to mine?
Flor. It is
So near akin that, as it comes of thine,
And lives on thine, so, without thine, it dies!
Hil. If my poor love
Hath called thine into life—so is my love
In duty bound to thine—its kith and kin!
Flor. But if the rumours of thy Florian's death
Should prove, as rumours often prove, untrue?
If he should be alive—loving thee well—
Eager to tell his love to thee—what then?
Hil. (*sadly*). Thou jealous fount, what untold miracle
Would bear the tidings to this lonely isle?
Flor. Say that in wandering through the unknown world
Chance led Prince Florian to these shores, and he,
Flushed with the radiance of thy loveliness,
Stood manifest before thine eyes—what then?
Hil. Oh, Heaven, what then! Joy kills as sorrow kills.

I dare not think what then! Let it suffice
That I have given thee all—that I am thine
For ever and for aye!

Enter MOUSTA *unperceived; he places himself so that the dial conceals him from Florian and Hilda.*

Flor. "Ever and aye"
Are fragile flowers that fade before the breath
Of an old love long lost!
Hil. Oh, gentle voice,
Born of the falling water—have no fear—
In Heaven's sight I pledge myself to thee—
What love is in me, that I give to thee—
What love thou hast to give, I take from thee—
Kiss thou my hands—(*holding her hands for the water to fall on*)—henceforth we twain are one!

ACT II.

SCENE, *same as Act I. Time, Sunrise.*

Enter MOUSTA, *cautiously.*

Mous. I left him sleeping soundly in my hut,
He did not drink the wine—but still he sleeps.
(*Producing veil.*) I stole it from his pillow! Here's a prize:
Poor devil that I am—whose only hope
Of meeting other men on equal terms,
Lies in his chance of keeping out of sight!
Ha! someone comes. I'll hide thee carefully.
[*Places it under a stone of dial.*
Some day, maybe, thou'lt do as much for me!

Enter FLORIAN, *angrily.*

Flor. So here you are: I've sought you everywhere—
Mous. Ay, I am here. You're early from your bed—
Well, it's no bed for such fine folk as you;
I'm very sorry, but 'twas all I had.
Flor. The bed was well enough. I have been robbed.
Mous. Ay, ay? And how was that?

Flor. There is a thief
Upon this isle.
Mous. It's very possible.
When people come and go invisibly,
It's hard to say who is or is not here.
What has the villain robbed? a woman's heart?
Two women's hearts? How many women's hearts?
If there's a thief here, it is you or I,
It comes to that. Now, what is it you've lost?
Flor. My Talisman.
Mous. Your Talisman? Oh ho!
Flor. I see no cause for jest.
Mous. You don't? Observe—
A prince, or someone who so styles himself,
With power to make himself invisible,
Employs that power to gain admission to
An isle where certain maidens dwell—when there
His Talisman is stolen and he stands
Revealed before their eyes—the helpless butt
Of all their ridicule, with naught to say
But "Ladies, pray forgive me—I had thought
To enter unobserved—to wander here
And watch your movements—also unobserved;
And when grown weary of this novel sport
To take my leave of you—still unobserved,
But as I've failed, so pray you pardon me."
And off he goes, his tail between his legs,
Like a well-beaten hound!
Flor. (*seizing him*). Misshapen imp,
Have you so little care for such dog-life
As warms your twisted carcase, that you dare
To bandy jests with me?
Mous. Release me, sir!
Had I your Talisman, do you suppose
I should be here before your eyes? No, no—
Whovever has the veil is using it.
There are but six of us, besides myself.
If one of those is missing, why, be sure
That one hath taken it. I'll go and see.

[*Exit* MOUSTA.

Flor. The imp is right, and yet the Talisman
Was safe with me last night. But, who comes here!
Confusion! 'tis Vavir. I shall be seen!
Where can I hide myself?

Enter VAVIR; *she starts in intense alarm on seeing* FLORIAN.

Vav. Kind Heaven protect me!
Who art thou, and what dost thou on this isle?
Flor. Fair maiden, have no fear. I am a knight,
Sworn on the sacred code of Chivalry,
To hold all womankind in reverence.
Listen, and I will tell thee all—
Vav. (*who has recognized his voice, kneels as in adoration.*)
No need!
Thy voice hath told me all! I know thee now!
Oh, foolish heart, be still, for all is well—
He will not harm thee; this is he whose words,
Through the still watches of the long, long night,
Rang like a mighty clarion in mine ears,
"Vavir, I love thee with my whole, whole heart!"
Thou art the messenger of hope and life,
For Heaven hath not bestowed this joy on me
To take me from it. Yes, I am to live!
Flor. (*raising her*). Why, Heaven forgive me, maiden—
can it be
That thou hast loved this dial of thine with love
Akin to that which women bear to men?
Vav. Ay, that I have, as I've a soul to save!
Why, I have sat for hours and clung to it,
Until I half believed I felt a heart
Beating within its frame—and as I clung
Methought I drew both warmth and life from it!
I wondered then that such a thing could be—
Oh, my dear love, I do not wonder now! (*Embracing him.*)
Flor. (*aside*). God help thee, gentle maid! I little
thought
My heedless words, conceived in arrant jest,
Chimed in so aptly with thy fantasies!
(*Aloud.*) Be not deceived;
I am a mortal like thyself, in all
Except thine innocence!—A sinning man,
Unworthy of thy love. Be not deceived.
Vav. I know thee, and I love thee as thou art—
Not as the Spirit of my nightly dreams,
But as thou art—a man of Life and Death.
Flor. Hast thou then seen a Spirit in thy dreams?

Vav. I have—the Spirit of the Sun-dial—
A godlike form of fearful excellence,
Clad, like the Sun, in golden panoply—
His head surmounted with a diadem
That shed eternal rays—and, in his hand,
A mighty javelin of gold and fire.
So pictured I the Sun's Ambassador—
A god to worship—not a man to love! (*Leaning on his breast.*)
I had not guessed at half my happiness!
Flor. (*aside*). Now, by my knighthood, I would give ten years—
To find some way to break the truth to her!
Vav. Time was when I was very glad to die;
I did not fear what others seem to fear.
I have heard say that brave, stout-hearted men,
Whose reckless valour has withstood the test
Of many a battle-plain, will quail and blanch
Brought face to face with unexpected death.
I am a poor weak girl, whose fluttering heart
Quakes at the rustle of a leaf, and yet
I did not fear to die—I prayed to die!
But now thou hast so bound me to the earth,
Thou, oh my first, my last, my only love,
I dare not think of death! Oh, let me live,
My life is in thine hands—Oh, let me live!
Flor. Yes, thou shalt live, Vavir, so have no fear.
Vav. Thou wilt not leave me?
Flor. Only for a while;
I will return to thee.
Vav. So, hand in hand
We shall grow old, and die, still hand in hand?
Flor. Yes, ever hand in hand.
Vav. Oh, gentle Heaven,
I have more happiness than I can bear!

[*Exit* VAVIR.

Flor. Poor soul, what shall I say? To tell her now
Would be to kill her!

[*Pauses irresolute, then exit.*

Enter MOUSTA, *watching them.*

Mous. Oh, ho! young knight! I'm sorry for Vavir!
Well, it concerns me not: the girl is fair;
And traps are set for her because she's fair,

And she'll fall into them because she's fair.
Good looks
Should pay some penalty—that's only fair.
Better be such as I am, after all;
No one sets traps for me. Ha! who comes here?
The Lady Hilda, parting from Vavir—
Come forth, my Talisman, the time has come
To test thy power.

[*Takes veil from behind stone as* HILDA *enters hurriedly. He winds it about his head.*

Hil. Oh, Spirit of the Well,
I've wondrous news! The poor enchanted soul,
Till now entombed within the sun-dial,
Hath taken human form!
Oh, gentle spirit, grant my trembling prayer,
If thou hast power to quit thy silver stream
And stand in human form before mine eyes,
Then by my long and faithful love, I pray
That thou wilt suffer me to see thy face!

[MOUSTA *hobbles across behind the fountain, and replies as* FLORIAN.

Mous. Yes, I *can* take such form, but press me not——
Hil. And wherefore not?
Mous. I dare not show myself
Lest all thy love should fade?
Hil. Ah, have no fear,
My love runs with my life.
Mous. So women say,
Who live but once, yet love a dozen times!
Hil. I am not such as they!
Mous. I know it well—
Hil. Then let me see thy face—but once—but once—
Then thou shalt hie thee to thy well again
For ever if thou wilt!
Mous. That may not be—
Once seen in human form I must remain
A man—with more than man's infirmities.
I am no shapely spirit framed to catch
A woman's fancy—I am roughly hewn—
Somewhat uncouth—misshapen, some might say—
Dost thou not fear to look on me?
Hil. No, no.

Take thou thy form, whate'er that form may be!
Mous. But stay—
Thou hast a serving man—a crumpled wretch—
One-eyed and lame—but passing honest—say
That I am such a twisted thing as *he?*
What then?
Hil. (*tenderly*). Oh, Spirit of the Well, fear not,
My love is not a thing of yesterday;
Nor does it spring from thought of face and form.
I love thee for thy boundless charity,
That seeks no recompense—doing good works
In modest silence from the very love
Of doing good—bestowing life and strength
On high and low, on rich and poor alike;
Embracing in thy vast philosophy,
All creeds, all nations, and all ranks of men!
Holding thyself to be no higher than
The meanest wretch who claims thy charity,
Yet holding none to be of such account
As to deserve thine homage. Just to all,
Lovely in all thy modest deeds of good,
Excelling type of godliest charity,
Show thyself in whatever form thou wilt,
Oh, Spirit of the Well,
And I perforce must love thee!
Mous. Be it so!
Thou *shalt* behold me as I am. But first,
Ere I do that which cannot be undone,
Give me a solemn token that shall serve
As evidence of troth twixt thee and me.
Hil. Dost thou still doubt me then?
Mous. I doubt myself—
I doubt my rugged form, my rough-hewn face,
My crumpled limbs!—See, lady, I exchange
My immortality for Life and Death,
My demi-godhead for the state of Man—
Man, undersized and crippled, and accurst!
All this I do for thee—Let me be sure
That when I've done all this, thou wilt not cry,
"Away, distorted thing,
"My love is not for such a one as thou!"
Hil. Oh, doubting Spirit, take this sacred ring.
It is a holy relic—and a vow
Spoken thereon binds her who utters it

Through life to death. Upon this sacred stone,
I do repeat my vow of yesternight!
I am thy bride! (*Throws ring into the fountain.*)
Mous. (*taking the ring out of the fountain*). Then, lady,
have thy will!
But, bear in mind that modest virtue oft
Will clothe herself in most unlikely garb—
Mistrust all prejudice—well-favoured hearts
May underlie ill-favoured heads. We spurn
The dirt beneath our feet—but never less
We grovel in such dirt for diamonds,
And sometimes find them there! A comely face
Is but the food of Time—a kindly heart
Time touches but to soften—think of this,
And in thy breast some pity may be found,
For the poor wretch to whom thy troth is given!

[MOUSTA *reveals himself. Hilda, whose fears have been gradually aroused during this speech, recoils in horror and amazement at seeing him.*

Hil. Mousta! Oh, Heaven, what have I said and done!
Was *thine* the voice that spake?
Mous. (*abashed*). My lady, yes!
Hil. Oh, cruel, cruel!
Mous. Lady, pardon me.
I knew not what I did!
Hil. Oh, wretched man!
I pardon thee—thou dost not, canst not know
How deep a wound thine idle words have riven!
Oh, heart! my broken heart! (*Sinks on to ground by dial.*)
My Mousta, shame upon thee for this jest—
This heartless jest—this scurril mockery!
When thou wast sick to death I tended thee,
Through weary days, and weary, weary nights,
And bathed thy fevered brow, and prayed with thee,
And soothed thy pain with such poor minstrelsy
As I am mistress of—I sang to thee,
And brought thee pleasant books to help thee speed
The lagging hours of thy recovery.
Has my heart seemed to thee so stony hard
That it could bear this deadly blow unbruised?
Oh, Mousta, shame upon thee for this jest!
Mous. Jest, Lady Hilda? Nay, I did not jest!
Why, look at me!

Hil. (*gazing at him*). Oh, Mousta! Can it be
That thou hast dared—No, no, impossible,——
It is too terrible!
Mous. Ay, I *have* dared!
I studied necromancy—and I learnt
To weave a mighty engine for myself—
A web that gives invisibility. (*Producing veil.*)
Shrouded in this, I woo'd thee yesternight!
Oh, I *can* woo—At least, I've shown thee that!
A voice rang music in thine ears—'twas mine!
Words thrilled thee to the core—*I* spake those words!
Love filled thy very soul—'twas *I* that woo'd!
My very self, stripped of the hideous mask
In which my soul stands shrouded from the world.
I'll woo like that all day! But shut thine eyes,
Or turn thine head away, and I shall make
As fair a husband as the best of them!
Hil. Oh, horrible! Go—get thee hence, away—
Take money—what thou wilt—but get thee hence!
Oh, madman! madman!
Mous. Why, what could I do?
Should I have reasoned with myself, and said,
"Mousta, when thou wast sick and like to die,
The Lady Hilda came to thy bedside,
And sat, and nursed thee day by day—'twas nothing!
When writhing at thy very worst, her tears
Fell on thy face like rain,—a woman's trick!
When baffled Death was tugging at thy throat,
Her gentle prayers rose to the gate of Heaven,
Mingled with the insensate blasphemies
Of thy delirium—account it naught!
Go to thy labour—get thy spade and dig,
And when a foolish sob of gratitude
Rises unbidden to thy choking throat"
(They sometimes will—one can't be sure of them),
"Swear a big oath and whistle it away,
Lest it take root and blossom into love!"
Was *this* my duty, think ye? No, no, no,
My body's twisted, lady, not my heart.
Hil. (*with forced calmness*). But say that, bound in duty
to the troth
That thou hast wrung from me, I taught myself
I will not say to love—to bear with thee—
How could I hope to live at peace with one

Armed with so terrible a Talisman?
A Talisman that vests in him the power,
To come to me and go from me, unseen,
And play the truant at his own free will?
Thou askest more than womankind can grant.
Mous. (*trembling with excitement*). Oh, lady, lady, give me but thy love,
And in that gift will lie the surest proof
That I will not misuse my Talisman!
Hil. It may be so—but Time's an alchymist,
Who changes gold to dross. Some day, may be,
This love of thine will sicken, wane, and die.
How could I bear this widowhood of soul,
Knowing that thou hast power to come and go,
Unseen?
Mous. (*overjoyed*). Be sure I'll neither come nor go:
My place is at thy side. Such love as thine
Would surely chain the proudest prince on earth,
And how much more so poor a wretch as I!
Hil. I'll trust thee not.
Doubt would lie heavy at my heart, not less
Because I had no reason for that doubt.
Give me thy Talisman.
Mous. Nay, bear with me.
Hil. Give me thy Talisman.
Mous. Well, well, 'tis thine.
But bear in mind, the troth that thou hast pledged
Upon this ring can never be recalled.
Hil. I know it well.
I'll keep my troth. Give me thy Talisman.
Mous. Lady, 'tis thine. See how I trust in thee.
Do with it as thou wilt—rend it apart,
And cast it to the winds—its work is done! (*giving it to her*)
Behold me now unarmed.
Hil. (*changing her manner*). Unarmed be thou
As all should be who use a deadly power
To such foul traitorous ends! I am thy bride—
I am thy bride! Make thou the very most
Of such poor comfort as those words may hold.
Proclaim thy victory—say to thyself,
"She is my bride—I wrung an oath from her
With miserable lies—she is my bride!
She saved my wretched life, and in return
I poison hers—but still she is my bride.

She shudders at my all-polluting touch—
She loathes my mean and miserable soul:
What matters it, so that she be my bride?"
Oh, purblind fool—thy plot so subtly laid
Is laid too subtly—and the cunning snare
That trapped thy bird is laid too cunningly;
For as it made me thy poor prisoner,
So shall it hold me from thy deadly grasp
For ever and for ever! Raise thine head,
And look upon thy bride for once and all,
For by the Heaven above, the eye of man
Shall never rest upon my face again!

[*She covers her face with veil, and exit.*

Mous. (*furiously*). Fiends tear your throat to rags!—No, no, I rave——
Hilda—come back to me—I'll be thy slave,
Thy willing slave once more! I did but jest:
My jest is dead and gone—come back to me!
I will release thee from thy plighted troth:
I love thee—love thee—love thee! Oh, come back,
And save my soul and body! 'Twas a jest—
An idle jest. I am thy drudging slave,
No more than that! I never thought of love—
'Twas but a jest—'twas idly done, but well—
Oh, Lady Hilda—oh, come back to me!

Enter FLORIAN.

Flor. What is this outcry?
Mous. It concerns you not.
Flor. Where is the Lady Hilda?
Mous. Who shall say?
Flor. Why, thou shalt say. As there's a heaven above
I'll wring a civil answer from thy lips.
Mous. Take any answer that may fit your mood,
And leave me to myself. I'm not in cue
For more cross-questioning.
Flor. Thine impish tongue
Is set awry to-day.
Mous. (*savagely*). It *is* awry.
Take care! But stay; when you were seeking for
Your Talisman, you bade me ascertain,
If any one were missing. Very well,
The Lady Hilda's missing.

Flor. Foolish ape,
Dost thou infer—
Mous. I draw no inference.
I state the figures—add them for thyself.

Enter HILDA, *still veiled; she gazes in amazement at* FLORIAN.

Hil. (*aside*). Merciful Heaven, restore me if I rave—
His form, *his* face, *his* voice!
Flor. (*to* MOUSTA). Base liar, know
That we are plighted lovers, she and I—
She gave her heart to me but yesternight;
Why should she hide herself from me to-day?
Mous. Perhaps excess of joy hath driven her mad!
Flor. I'll not believe thy tale. The maid is here,
And can and shall be found!
Mous. Well, go and search.
And if thou findest her, why, I'm a liar—
Reward me as thou wilt!
Flor. A fit reward
Will be a yard of steel between thy ribs,
And thou shalt have it!
Mous. Thank you kindly, sir!
[*Exit* MOUSTA; FLORIAN *sits dejectedly by fountain.*
Hil. 'Twas he that spake to me! How can I doubt?
Are there two such as he? Oh, Heaven, is this
The senseless herald of a mind unstrung?
Let me be sure.
He spake of me, who long had mourned him dead—
He told how, shrouded from my gaze last night,
He gave his love to me. Oh, gentle Heaven,
Give me more strength to bear this weight of joy!

[*She advances to reveal herself, when* VAVIR *enters, and sits lovingly at* FLORIAN'S *feet.* HILDA, *horrified, veils herself again.*

Vav. At last I've found thee, Florian—far and near
I've sought thee, for I'm very strong to-day.
Why, what a wise physician is this Love!
For see—my eyes are bright—my face is flushed—
Flushed with the glow of health. This new-born love
Gives me a new-born strength. Oh, Florian,
Place thine arms round me—let me rest on thee;

I draw my life from thee—my heart—my heart!
Flor. (*aside.*) Alas, poor maiden—I must tell thee all,
May Heaven help me break the truth to thee!
(*Aloud.*) Dear little lady, yield not up thine heart
Too readily. The world is set with traps
And hidden pitfalls. Keep thy gentle heart
For one who, by his pure and godly life,
Hath given thee proof of his right worthiness.
Vav. (*surprised*). Why speakest thou in parable? Behold,
Have I not loved thee for a long, long year?
Flor. What proof hast thou that I indeed am he
Whom thou hast loved so long?
Vav. I have thy word,
And had I not thy word, I have my heart
To tell me whom to seek and whom to shun.
Flor. Mistrust that little heart. It is not framed
To guide thee of itself. Like virgin gold
Untainted by alloy, it is too pure
For this rough-ready world of work-a-day!
I have a tale to tell. There was a knight
Who, as he journeyed, met a gentle maid,
With whom he, light of heart and light of tongue,
Conversed in playful strain. The maid was fair,
And he, in jest, spake loving words to her,
Believing that she knew them to be feigned. (*At this point it begins to dawn upon* VAVIR *that* FLORIAN *is referring to her.*)
She, pure as Faith—having no thought of guile
Tender and trustful in her innocence—
Believed the madcap knight's unworthy words,
And nursed them in her heart. He, smit with shame,
For he was plighted to her sister (VAVIR, *finding her fears confirmed, rises, shrinking from* FLORIAN, *expressing extreme pain. He rises after her*) whom
He loved with an exceeding love, essayed,
With clumsy hint and far-fetched parable,
To break the truth to her. At length—at length,
By very slow degrees—light came to her!
Shall I go on?
Vav. (*faintly*). No need—I know the rest!
The maiden died—she pardoned him, and died! (VAVIR *during the ensuing lines shows symptoms of fainting.*)

Flor. (*passionately*). No, no—Vavir—she lived—the maiden lived!
He was not worth a tear—she loved him well,
But still she lived, Vavir—but still she lived!
If only for the gentle sister whom
She loved so tenderly, and for whose sake
She, in the blushing day-break of her life,
Had yielded up the world. Oh, say she lived!

[VAVIR *falls senseless in* FLORIAN'S *arms.* HILDA, *who has been listening eagerly to the latter part of* FLORIAN'S *tale, kneels, praying, as the act drop falls.*

ACT III.

SCENE, *same as Act I. About half an hour before Sunset.*

VIR *discovered sleeping at foot of Sun-dial.* MELUSINE *is kneeling.* AMANTHIS *is standing, leaning on dial.* VAVIR'S *head rests on pillows, and a cloak envelopes her.*

Am. How peacefully she sleeps! Oh, Melusine,
Can it be that this solemn death-like calm
Is but the silent herald of the end?
Mel. As she has lived, so will our darling die—
Gently and peacefully. This tranquil sleep
May change to tranquil death, and give no sign.
So will she pass away!
Am. But see—she wakes:
Would Heaven that we had fairer news for thee,
My poor Vavir!
Vav. (*awaking, and very feebly*). Thy face is very sad—
Are there no tidings of my sister?
Mel. None!
Vav. Dear Melusine, keep not the truth from me!
Some fearful evil has befallen her—
Tell me the truth. See, I am stronger now.
Mel. Nay, calm thyself, Vavir—save only that
She has been sought, and has not yet been found,
We have no truth to tell.

Vav. How speeds the day?
Am. Thy dial points to eight.
Vav. One little hour,
And then my Sun will set. Farewell, oh Sun!
How gloriously he dies!
Mel. The sun will sink,
To rest throughout the night, as we shall rest,
But not to die.
Vav. To die as we should die:
The night is given to the world that she
May mourn her widowhood. *He* knows no night,
But journeys calmly on his heavenly path
Wrapt in eternal light—in all, a type
Of the excelling life we try to live—
Of the all-glorious death we hope to die!
Mel. See, Vavir, see upon the Beacon-hill,
Mousta, returning from his weary search—
Vav. Is he alone?
Mel. Alas, my darling, yes!
But still perchance he brings some news to us:
I'll go and meet him. Stay thou here, Vavir,
And I will bring thee tidings.
Vav. Be it so—
Be quick, be quick, dear Melusine—and then (*to both*)
Go, seek Prince Florian—and say to him
That I would fain have speech with him alone,
If he will deign to grant me audience.
[*Exeunt* MELUSINE *and* AMANTHIS.
Another hour—and then, my Sun will set!
Oh, Hilda—oh, my sister—come to me!

HILDA *enters, veiled.*

The loving day is drawing to a close:
I dare not face the cold, black night alone!
I want thine arms around me, and thy face
Pressed once again on mine, before I die.
Oh, Hilda—oh, my sister—come to me!
Hil. (*unveiling, and kneeling*). Vavir! Fear nothing.
I am here, my child.
Vav. (*embracing her*). Hilda! My sister! Heaven is merciful!
And thou art safe and well?
Hil. Yes, safe and well.

Vav. Where hast thou been? Throughout the long, long day
My weeping sisters have been seeking thee.
Hil. No matter now, Vavir. When thou art strong
I'll tell thee all.
Vav. But I have news for thee,
Rare news, dear sister! Dry those gentle eyes;
The mighty sorrow that hath bowed thy heart
Is at an end! Thy prince—thy Florian,
Whom thou hast loved so tenderly—he lives!
Hilda, my sister, he is seeking thee!
Here, on this island, he is seeking thee!
Hilda, he loves thee; for he told me so!
Hil. I know he loves me.
Vav. Thou hast seen him then?
Hil. I know he loves me; ay, even more,
Vavir, I know the secret of thy heart—
Poor broken heart!
Vav. Oh! sister, pardon me.
I did not seek his love—nor knew I then
That he had loved thee—Sister, pardon me,
For I have suffered very bitterly!
Hil. Vavir, I have a prayer to make to thee.
Vavir, thou lovest him: thy little life,
More precious to us all than all the world,
Lies in his hands—he is thy life to thee,
And pitying Heaven hath led him to our shores
To save thee for us. Take no thought for me,
For I have wrestled with this love of mine
And vanquished it—it lies beneath my feet! (*With assumed gaiety.*)
Remember, thou and I have but one heart,
And so that it is happy—what care we
Whose bosom it may beat in—thine or mine?
(Nay, but thou shalt not speak!) I'll keep away.
His eyes shall never rest on me again;
He will forget me, then, and wondrous soon!
Men's hearts are in their eyes—this love of theirs
Must have its daily food or it will die:
I'll keep away—so take him to thine heart,
And tell him—tell him—that I spake in jest,
That I had plucked his image from my heart
And cast it from me twelve long months ago.
Say that my heart is cold and dead to him.

Say that—say that—
(HILDA *breaks down, and sobs in* VAVIR'S *lap.*)
Vav. Oh, sister, weep no more!
Thy prince hath chosen, and hath chosen well.
Of what account is such a life as mine?
Why, it is ebbing fast! Grieve not for me.
And yet I fain would live a little while,
To see thy face once more alight with joy,
As in the old, old days!
Hil. So shalt thou live
To see my joy at thine own happiness.
Vavir, he will be sorry for a while.
Be kind to him—he will forget me then.
Remember, all my love for him is dead.
Kiss me, my child. Kiss me again. Farewell!
[HILDA *pauses, looking at* VAVIR *for a moment, then covers her face with the veil, and exit.*
Vav. Oh, loving heart—sweet, gentle sister-heart—
To bid me blight the outset of thy life
That I may count the time that's left to me
By days instead of hours! Come back to me—
I have no time to love—the end is near!

Enter MELUSINE, *followed by* FLORIAN.

Flor. Obedient to thy summons I am here.
Yet I am very loth to look upon
The misery my heedlessness hath caused.
Vav. (*leaning on* MELUSINE, *with an effort to appear cheerful*). Sir Florian, my pain is at an end.
The blow was heavy: for I am not strong,
And jests are new to me. Forgive me, sir.
My brain is filled with foolish fantasties
That carry me beyond my reasoning self.
I pray your pardon. Think no more of me,
Save as the subject of a merry tale—
How a mad maiden loved a sun-dial,
And very dearly, too! I have some news
To give you comfort. Hilda has been here.
She is alive and well.
Flor. Then Heaven be thanked!
Vav. But stay—you met her as you came?
Mel. No, no,

We saw no sign of her.

Vav. It's very strange.
She left me but a minute since, and took
The path by which you came. Go, seek her, sir;
Be very sure she waits you close at hand.
Come, Melusine. Farewell, Sir Florian;
Deal gently with me when you tell the tale!

[*Exit* VAVIR, *supported by* MELUSINE. *She shows by her change of expression that the effort to appear cheerful has caused her great suffering.*

Flor. She took that path—and yet I saw her not!
There's but one clue to this strange mystery:
She has the Talisman! By what strange means
It found its way into her spotless hands
I've yet to learn!

MOUSTA *has entered during this speech.*

Mous. Let me assist you, sir,
I stole it from your pillow as you slept,
And used it for my ends. I took your place
Beside the fountain, and I woo'd her there.
And there she pledged herself to be my wife—
And, as a token, gave this ring to me! (*Showing ring.*)

Flor. Why, miserable ape, hast thou then lost
The mere life-seeking instinct that inspires
The very meanest of thy fellow-beasts,
That thou hast come to say these things to *me*?

Mous. I have! I say these things to you, because
I want to die! I tried to kill myself—
But I'm no hero, and my courage failed.
(*Furiously.*) She's gone from you for ever—and I come
To mock the bitter blighting of your life—
To chuckle at the aching misery
That eats your heart away! I come to spit
My hate upon you—If my toad's mouth held
The venom of a toad, I would spit that!
Come—have I said enough? Then draw thy sword
And make an end of me—I am prepared!

Flor. (*drawing sword*). I needed no assurance, yea or nay,
That some foul planning of thy leper-heart
Had worked this devilry! Thou lovest her?

Thou lovest her? Is there no blasphemy
That devils shrink from? Hast thou seen thyself? (*Seizing* Mousta *and holding his head over the pool.*)
Look in the fountain—bend thy cursed head!
Look at it—dog-face! (Mousta *struggles.*) Shrink not back appalled—
It will not harm thee, coward—look at it!
What do we do with such a thing as *that*
When it dares claim a common right with Man?
We crush it underfoot—we stamp it down,
Lest other reptiles take their cue from it,
And say, "If he is human, so are we!" (*Flinging him on ground.*)

Mous. (*crouching on ground*). Spare me your tongue!
I well know what I am,
And what I've done. My life is forfeited.
Strike at the heart! Be quick—I am prepared!

Flor. Hast thou no prayer to utter?

Mous. No, not I.
Curse you, be quick, I say! Yet stay—one word.
Before you pass your sword between my ribs,
Look at yourself, sir knight, then look at me!
You, comely, straight-limbed, fair of face and form—
(I say not this to court your favour, sir—
The Devil take your favour!)—I, a dwarf,
Crooked, humpbacked, and one-eyed—so foul a thing
That I am fain to quote my love for women
To prove that I have kinship with mankind.
Well, we are deadly rivals, you and I.
Do we start fair, d'ye think? Are you and I
So nicely matched in all that wins a woman
That I should hold myself in honour bound
By laws of courtesy? But one word more,
And I have done. Had I those shapely limbs,
That fair, smooth face, those two great, god-like eyes
(May lightning blast them, as it blasted mine!),
Believe me, sir, I'd use no Talismans!
Now kill me—I'm prepared. I only ask
One boon of you—strike surely, and be quick! (*Pauses for a moment—then sheathes his sword.*)

Flor. Go, take thy life, I'll none of it! With one
Whom Heaven hath so defaced, let Heaven deal.
I will not sit in judgment on thy sin!
My wrath has faded—when I look upon

The seal that Heaven hath set upon thy brow,
Why, I could find it in my heart to ask
Thy pardon for the fury of my words!
Go, take thy life, make fairer use of it.
Mous. (*much moved*). I thank you, sir—not for my blighted life,
But for the pitying words in which you grant it. (*With emotion.*)
You've moved me very deeply. (*Places the ring that* HILDA *gave him on* FLORIAN'S *finger—then kisses his hand.*) Curse the tears.
I am not used to weep, my lord,—but then
I am not used to gentleness from men. [*Exit* MOUSTA.
Flor. Unhappy creature, go thy ways in peace.
Thou hast atoned. Oh, Hilda, come to me!
If thou art here—if thou canst hear my words,
Then by the love that thou hast borne to me,
By all the tears that thou hast shed for me,
By all the hope thou hast held out to me,
I do implore thee to reveal thyself!

Enter HILDA, *veiled.*

Fear nothing, for I have the holy ring
On which thine oath was given. By cunning fraud
That oath was wrung from thee. Fear nothing now.
Hil. (*unveiling*). Sir Florian, I am here!
Flor. (*passionately*). Oh, Hilda, mine
My only love! Safe in my arms at last!
Why didst thou hide thyself away from me?
Hil. (*hurriedly*). I hid myself to save my sister's life;
To save her life I now reveal myself.
Flor. How fares Vavir?
Hil. Alas! her little life is ebbing fast
From heart-wounds of thy making! Florian,
I have no time to lose on empty forms—
I have no words to waste on idle speech—
My poor sick sister loves thee! Much misled
By thy light words, she placed full faith in thee:
And she is dying for her faith. Oh, sir,
There is but one physician in the world
Who, under Heaven, can save my darling's life.
Go to her now. If thou hast loved me, sir,
Be merciful, and save this life for me!

Flor. Hilda, be just. How can I do this thing?
Can I command my heart, or deal with it
As I can deal with life or limb? By Heaven,
I would lay down my life to save Vavir,
But not my love!
Hil. I do not ask thy life!
I have a life to yield, if such a price
Could save my sister. Oh, forgive me, sir;
My weight of grief hath maddened me; and yet
I ask for no one-sided sacrifice.
What is thy loss to mine? For three long years
This love of thee tinged my devoted life
With such blank woe—such utter misery—
That I was fain—hope being dead to me—
To sit apart, and wait the far-off end.
Then, when the end seemed yet too far away,
The bright, blue Heaven shone through the lowering clouds,
For he whom I had mourned as dead, came back,
To claim my love and crown it with his own!
At last, at last, I hold thee by the hand! (*Taking* FLORIAN *by both hands.*)
At last I have thy love, oh, love of mine!
Thou art my very own—at last—at last!
Well, then, Sir Florian, I yield thee up! (*Releasing him.*)
To save her life I tear this new-born joy
Out of my very heart: for her I crush
My only hope on earth! If I can yield
The love of three long years to save her life,
Canst thou not yield thy love of yesterday?
Flor. The task is very bitter. Yesternight
I learnt that thou whom I so blindly love
Had blindly loved me years ago—to-day
Thou bidd'st me take this love of mine elsewhere!
Hil. Art thou so sure that I *have* loved thee long?
I loved one Florian—a stainless knight,
Brave as the very Truth—and, being brave,
Tender and merciful as brave men are;
Whose champion heart was sworn in chivalry
To save all women, sorrowing and oppressed;
Nor did he hold that woman to be banned
Whose sorrow came of her great love for him!
Tell me—art thou the Florian that I loved?
Flor. If not that stainless Florian—yet one

Who would be such as he. (*Taking her by both hands.*)
I have thy love—
I who have lived a loveless life till now.
Well, then, I yield thee up! (*Releasing her.*) If words of mine
Can save thy sister, I will speak those words!
Hil. I knew it! Florian, I was sure of thee!
God bless thee, Florian; thou hast saved her life! (*Kissing his forehead.*)
(*Passionately.*) Oh, how I love thee! (*With hurried emphasis.*) Go to her at once—
Go to her quickly, ere it be too late!
Flor. Thy sister comes this way. (*Aside.*) Alas! Vavir,
There is more Heaven than Earth in that pale face!

Enter VAVIR, *very pale and weak, supported by* MELUSINE *and* AMANTHIS. FLORIAN *receives her in his arms and they lay her gently on the ground.* HILDA *rushes to her, as they place her on the ground, near the sun-dial.* FLORIAN *kneels by her, and takes her hand.*

Hil. Vavir, my love—my gentle sister. See,
He loves thee—Florian loves thee! He is here
To tell thee this—to call thee back to life.
Come at his call! The earth is bright for thee.
See how he loves thee. Oh, Vavir, come back!
Vav. (*very faintly*). It is too late—too late! I feel the hand
Of Death upon my heart. So let it be.
My day is spent—my tale is nearly told!
Hil. Vavir—Vavir!
Have pity on us! Gentle little soul,
Fly not to thine appointed Heaven—not yet—
Not yet—not yet! Eternity is thine;
Spare but a few brief years to us on Earth,
And still Eternity remains to thee!
He loves thee—Florian loves thee well! Oh, Death,
Are there no hoary men and aged women
Weeping for thee to come and comfort them?
Oh, Death—oh, Death—leave me this little flower!
Take thou the fruit, but pass the blossom by!
Vav. (*very feebly*). Weep not: the bitterness of death is past.

Kiss me, my sister. Florian, think of me—
I loved thee very much! Be good to her.
Dear sister, place my hand upon my dial.
Weep not for me; I have no pain indeed.
Kiss me again; my sun has set. Good night!
Good night!

[VAVIR *dies*; HILDA *falling senseless on her body.*

CURTAIN.

ENGAGED.

AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL FARCICAL COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS.

First produced at the Haymarket Theatre, under the management of MR. J. S. CLARKE, *Wednesday, 3rd October,* 1877.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Cheviot Hill, *a young man of property* ...	Mr. George Honey.
Belvawney, *his friend*	Mr. Harold Kyrle.
Mr. Symperson	Mr. Howe.
Angus Macalister, *a Lowland peasant lad*	Mr. Dewar.
Major McGillicuddy	Mr. Weathersby.
Belinda Treherne	Miss Marion Terry.
Minnie, *Symperson's daughter*	Miss Lucy Buckstone.
Mrs. Macfarlane, *a Lowland widow* ...	Miss Emily Thorne.
Maggie, her daughter, *a Lowland lassie*	Miss Julia Stewart.
Parker, *Minnie's maid*	Miss Julia Roselle.

ACT I.

GARDEN OF A COTTAGE, NEAR GRETNA.

(On the border, between England and Scotland.)

ACTS II. AND III.

DRAWING-ROOM IN SYMPERSON'S HOUSE IN LONDON.

Three months' interval is supposed to elapse between Acts I. and II.

Three days' interval is supposed to elapse between Acts II. and III.

ENGAGED.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Garden of a humble but picturesque cottage, near Gretna, on the border between England and Scotland. The whole scene is suggestive of rustic prosperity and content.* MAGGIE MACFARLANE, *a pretty country girl, is discovered spinning at a wheel, and singing as she spins.* ANGUS MACALISTER, *a good-looking peasant lad, appears on at back, and creeps softly down to* MAGGIE *as she sings and spins, and places his hands over her eyes.*

Ang. Wha is it?

Mag. Oh, Angus, ye frightened me sae! (*He releases her.*) And see there—the flax is a' knotted and scribbled—and I'll do naething wi' it!

Ang. Meg! My Meg! My ain bonnie Meg!

Mag. Angus, why, lad, what's wrang wi' e'e? Thou hast tear-drops in thy bonnie blue een.

Ang. Dinna heed them, Meg. It comes fra glowerin' at thy bright beauty. Glowerin' at thee is like glowerin' at the noonday sun!

Mag. Angus, thou'rt talking fulishly. I'm but a puir brown hill-side lassie. I dinna like to hear sic things from a straight honest lad like thee. It s the way the dandy toun-folk speak to me, and it does na come rightly from the lips of a simple man.

Ang. Forgive me, Meg, for I speak honestly to ye. Angus Macalister is not the man to deal in squeaming compliments. Meg, I love thee dearly, as thou well knowest. I'm but a puir lad, and I've little but twa braw arms and a straight hairt to live by, but I've saved a wee bit siller—I've a braw housie and a scrappie of gude garden-land—and it's a' for thee, lassie, if thou'll gie me thy true and tender little hairt!

Mag. Angus, I'll be fair and straight wi' ee. Thou askest

me for my hairt. Why, Angus, thou'rt tall, and fair, and brave. Thou'st a gude, honest face, and a gude, honest hairt, which is mair precious than a' the gold on earth! No man has a word to say against Angus Macalister—no, nor any woman neither. Thou hast strong arms to work wi', and a strong hairt to help thee work. And wha am I that I should say that a' these blessings are not enough for me? If thou, gude, brave, honest man, will be troubled wi' sic a puir little, humble mousie as Maggie Macfarlane, why, she'll just be the proudest and happiest lassie in a' Dumfries!

Ang. My ain darling! (*They embrace.*)

Enter MRS. MACFARLANE *from cottage.*

Mrs. Mac. Why, Angus—Maggie, what's a' this!

Ang. Mistress Macfarlane, dinna be fasht wi' me; dinna think worse o' me than I deserve. I've loved your lass honestly these fifteen years, but I never plucked up the hairt to tell her so until noo; and when she answered fairly, it wasna in human nature to do aught else but hold her to my hairt and place one kiss on her bonnie cheek.

Mrs. Mac. Angus, say nae mair. My hairt is sair at losing my only bairn; but I'm nae fasht wi' ee. Thou'rt a gude lad, and it's been the hope of my widowed auld heart to see you twain one. Thou'lt treat her kindly—I ken that weel. Thou'rt a prosperous, kirk-going man, and my Mag should be a happy lass indeed. Bless thee, Angus; bless thee!

Ang. (*wiping his eyes*). Dinna heed the water in my ee—it will come when I'm ower glad. Yes, I'm a fairly prosperous man. What wi' farmin' a bit land, and gillieing odd times, and a bit o' poachin' now and again; and what wi' my illicit whusky still—and throwin' trains off the line, that the poor distracted passengers may come to my cot, I've mair ways than one of making an honest living—and I'll work them a' nicht and day for my bonnie Meg!

Mrs. Mac. D'ye ken, Angus, I sometimes think that thou'rt losing some o' thine auld skill at upsetting railway trains. Thou hast not done sic a thing these sax weeks, and the cottage stands sairly in need of sic chance custom as the poor delayed passengers may bring.

Mag. Nay, mither, thou wrangest him. Even noo, this very day, has he not placed twa bonnie braw sleepers across the up-line, ready for the express from Glasgie, which is due in twa minutes or so?

Mrs. Mac. Gude lad! Gude thoughtfu' lad! But I hope the unfortunate passengers wil na' be much hurt, puir unconscious bodies!

Ang. Fear nought, mither. Lang experience has taught me to do my work deftly. The train will run off the line, and the traffic will just be blocked for half a day, but I'll warrant ye that, wi' a' this, nae man, woman, or child amang them will get sae much as a bruised head or a broken nose.

Meg. My ain tender-hearted Angus! He wadna hurt sae much as a blatherin' buzzin' bluebottle flee!

Ang. Nae, Meg, not if takin' care and thought could help the poor dumb thing! (*Wiping his eyes.*) There, see, lass (*looking off*), the train's at a standstill, and there's nae harm done. I'll just go and tell the puir distraught passengers that they may rest them here, in thy cot, gin they will, till the line is cleared again. Mither, get thy rooms ready, and put brose i' the pot, for mebbe they'll be hungry, puir souls. Farewell, Meg; I'll be back ere lang, and if I don't bring 'ee a full half-dozen o' well-paying passengers, thou may'st just wed the red-headed excisenan! [*Exit* ANGUS.

Meg. Oh, mither, mither, I'm ower happy! I've nae deserved sic a good fortune as to be the wife o' yon brave and honest lad!

Mrs. Mac. Meg, thine auld mither's hairt is sair at the thought o' losin' ye, for hitherto she's just been a' the world to 'ee; but now thou'lt cleave to thine Angus, and thou'lt learn to love him better than thy puir auld mither! But it mun be—it mun be!

Meg. Nay, mither, say not that. A gude girl loves her husband wi' one love and her mither wi' anither. They are not alike, but neither is greater nor less than the ither, and they dwell together in peace and unity. That is how a gude girl loves.

Mrs. Mac. And thou art a gude girl, Meg?

Meg. I am a varra gude girl indeed, mither—a varra, varra guce girl!

Mrs. Mac. I'm richt sure o' that. Well, the puir belated passengers will be here directly, and it is our duty to provide for them sic puir hospitality as our humble roof will afford. It shall never be said o' Janie Macfarlane that she ever turned the weary traveller fainting from her door.

Mac. My ain gentle-hearted mither!

[*Exeunt together into cottage.*

Enter ANGUS *with* BELVAWNEY *and* MISS TREHERNE. *She is in travelling costume, and both are much agitated and alarmed.*

Ang. Step in, sir—step in, and sit ye doun for a wee. I'll just send Mistress Macfarlane to ye. She's a gude auld bodie, and will see to your comforts as if she was your ain mither.

Bel. Thank you, my worthy lad, for your kindness at this trying moment. I assure you we shall not forget it.

Ang. Ah, sir, wadna any mon do as muckle? A dry shelter, a bannock and a pan o' parritch is a' we can offer ye, but sic as it is ye're hairtily welcome.

Bel. It is well—we thank you.

Ang. For wha wadna help the unfortunate?

Bel. (*occupied with* MISS TREHERNE). Exactly—every one would.

Ang. Or feed the hungry?

Bel. No doubt.

Ang. It just brings the tear drop to my ee' to think ——

Bel. (*leading him off*). My friend, we would be alone, this maiden and I. Farewell! (*Exit* ANGUS, *into cottage.*) Belinda—my own—my life! Compose yourself. It was in truth a weird and gruesome accident. The line is blocked—your parasol is broken, and your butterscotch trampled in the dust, but no serious harm is done. Come, be cheerful. We are safe—quite safe.

Miss T. Safe! Ah, Belvawney, my own own Belvawney—there is, I fear, no safety for us so long as we are liable to be overtaken by that fearful Major to whom I was to have been married this morning!

Bel. Major McGillicuddy? I confess I do not feel comfortable when I think of Major McGillicuddy.

Miss T. You know his barbaric nature, and how madly jealous he is. If he should find that I have eloped with you he will most surely shoot us both!

Bel. It is an uneasy prospect. (*Suddenly.*) Belinda, do you love me?

Miss T. With an impetuous passion that I shall carry with me to the tomb!

Bel. Then be mine to-morrow! We are not far from Gretna, and the thing can be done without delay. Once married, the arm of the law will protect us from this fearful man, and we can defy him to do his worst.

Miss T. Belvawney, all this is quite true. I love you madly,

passionately; I care to live but in your heart, I breathe but for your love; yet, before I actually consent to take the irrevocable step that will place me on the pinnacle of my fondest hopes, you must give me some definite idea of your pecuniary position. I am not mercenary, Heaven knows; but business is business, and I confess I should like a little definite information about the settlements.

Bel. I often think that it is deeply to be deplored that these grovelling questions of money should alloy the tenderest and most hallowed sentiments that inspire our imperfect natures.

Miss T. It is unfortunate, no doubt, but at the same time it is absolutely necessary.

Bel. Belinda, I will be frank with you. My income is £1000 a year, which I hold on certain conditions. You know my friend Cheviot Hill, who is travelling to London in the same train with us, but in the third class?

Miss T. I believe I know the man you mean.

Bel. Cheviot, who is a young man of large property, but extremely close-fisted, is cursed with a strangely amatory disposition, as you will admit when I tell you that he has contracted a habit of proposing marriage, as a matter of course, to every woman he meets. His haughty father (who comes of a very old family—the Cheviot Hills had settled in this part of the world centuries before the Conquest) is compelled by his health to reside in Madeira. Knowing that I exercise an all but supernatural influence over his son, and fearing that his affectionate disposition would lead him to contract an undesirable marriage, the old gentleman allows me £1000 a year so long as Cheviot shall live single, but at his death or marriage the money goes over to Cheviot's uncle Symperson, who is now travelling to town with him.

Miss T. Then so long as your influence over him lasts, so long only will you retain your income?

Bel. That is, I am sorry to say, the state of the case.

Miss T. (*after a pause*). Belvawney, I love you with an imperishable ardour which mocks the power of words. If I were to begin to tell you now of the force of my indomitable passion for you, the tomb would close over me before I could exhaust the entrancing subject. But, as I said before, business is business, and unless I can see some distinct probability that your income will be permanent, I shall have no alternative but to weep my heart out in all the anguish of maiden solitude—uncared for, unloved, and alone!

[*Exit* MISS TREHERNE *into cottage.*

Bel. There goes a noble-hearted girl, indeed! Oh, for the gift of Cheviot's airy badinage—oh, for his skill in weaving a net about the hearts of women! If I could but induce her to marry me at once before the dreadful Major learns our flight! Why not? We are in Scotland. Methinks I've heard two loving hearts can wed, in this strange country, by merely making declaration to that effect. I will think out some cunning scheme to lure her into marriage unawares.

Enter MAGGIE, *from cottage.*

Mag. Will ye walk in and rest a wee, Maister Belvawney? There's a room ready for ye, kind sir, and ye're heartily welcome to it.

Bel. It is well. Stop! Come hither, maiden.

Mag. Oh, sir! you do not mean any harm towards a puir, innocent, unprotected cottage lassie?

Bel. Harm! No: of course, I don't. What do you mean?

Mag. I'm but a puir, humble mountain girl; but let me tell you, sir, that my character's just as dear to me as the richest and proudest lady's in the land. Before I consent to approach ye, swear to me that you mean me no harm.

Bel. Harm? Of course, I don't. Don't be a little fool. Come here.

Mag. There is something in his manner that reassures me. It is not that of the airy trifler with innocent hairts. (*Aloud.*) What wad ye wi' puir, harmless Maggie Macfarlane, gude sir?

Bel. Can you tell me what constitutes a Scotch marriage?

Mag. Oh, sir, it's nae use asking me that; for my hairt is not my ain to give. I'm betrothed to the best and noblest lad in a' the bonnie Borderland. Oh, sir, I canna be your bride!

Bel. My girl, you mistake. I do not want you for my bride. Can't you answer a simple question? What constitutes a Scotch marriage?

Mag. Ye've just to say before twa witnesses, "Maggie Macfarlane is my wife;" and I've just to say, "Maister Belvawney is my husband," and nae mon can set us asunder. But, sir, I canna be your bride; for I am betrothed to the best and noblest——

Bel. I congratulate you. You can go.

Mag. Yes, sir. [*Exit* MAGGIE *into cottage.*

Bel. It is a simple process; simple, but yet how beautiful! One thing is certain—Cheviot may marry any day, despite my

precautious, and then I shall be penniless. He may die, and equally I shall be penniless. Belinda has £500 a year; it is not much, but it would, at least, save me from starvation.

[*Exit* BELVAWNEY.

Enter SYMPERSON *and* CHEVIOT HILL *over bridge. They both show signs of damage—their hats are beaten in and their clothes disordered through the accident.*

Symp. Well, here we are at last——

Ch. Yes; here we are at last, and a pretty state I'm in, to be sure.

Symp. My dear nephew, you would travel third class, and this is the consequence. After all, there's not much harm done.

Ch. Not much harm? What d'ye call that? (*Showing his hat.*) Ten and ninepence at one operation! My gloves split—one and four! My coat ruined—eighteen and six! It's a coarse and brutal nature that recognizes no harm that don't involve loss of blood. I'm reduced by this accident from a thinking, feeling, reflecting human being, to a moral pulp—a mash—a poultice. Damme, sir, that's what I am! I'm a poultice!

Sym. Cheviot, my dear boy, at the moment of the accident you were speaking to me on a very interesting subject.

Ch. Was I? I forget what it was. The accident has knocked it clean out of my head.

Sym. You were saying that you were a man of good position and fortune; that you derived £2000 a year from your bank; that you thought it was time you settled. You then reminded me that I should come into Belvawney's £1000 a year on your marriage, and I'm not sure, but I rather think you mentioned, casually, that my daughter Minnie is an Angel of Light.

Ch. True, and just then we went off the line. To resume—Uncle Symperson, your daughter Minnie is an Angel of Light, a perfect being, as innocent as a new-laid egg.

Sym. Minnie is, indeed, all that you have described her.

Ch. Uncle, I'm a man of few words. I feel and I speak. I love that girl, madly, passionately, irresistibly. She is my whole life, my whole soul and body, my Past, my Present, and my To Come. I have thought for none but her; she fills my mind, sleeping and waking; she is the essence of every hope—the tree upon which the fruit of my heart is growing—my own To Come!

Sym. (*who has sunk overpowered on to stool during this speech*). Cheviot, my dear boy, excuse a father's tears. I won't beat about the bush. You have anticipated my devoutest wish. Cheviot, my dear boy, take her, she is yours!

Ch. I have often heard of rapture, but I never knew what it was till now. Uncle Symperson, bearing in mind the fact that your income will date from the day of the wedding, when may this be?

Sym. My boy, the sooner the better! Delicacy would prompt me to give Belvawney a reasonable notice of the impending loss of his income, but should I, for such a mere selfish reason as that, rob my child of one hour of the happiness that you are about to confer upon her? No! Duty to my child is paramount!

Ch. On one condition, however, I must insist. This must be kept from Belvawney's knowledge. You know the strange, mysterious influence that his dreadful eyes exercise over me.

Sym. I have remarked it with astonishment.

Ch. They are much inflamed just now, and he has to wear green spectacles. While this lasts I am a free agent, but under treatment they may recover. In that case, if he knew that I contemplated matrimony, he would use them to prevent my doing so—and I cannot resist them—I cannot resist them! Therefore, I say, until I am safely and securely tied up, Belvawney must know nothing about it.

Sym. Trust me, Cheviot, he shall know nothing about it from *me*. (*Aside.*) A thousand a year! I have endeavoured, but in vain, to woo Fortune for fifty-six years, but she smiles upon me at last!—she smiles upon me at last!

[*Exit* Symperson *into cottage.*

Ch. At length my hopes are to be crowned! Oh, my own—my own—the hope of my heart—my love—my life!

Enter Belvawney, *who has overheard these words.*

Bel. Cheviot! Whom are you apostrophizing in those terms? You've been at it again, I see!

Ch. Belvawney, that apostrophe was private; I decline to admit you to my confidence.

Bel. Cheviot, what is the reason of this strange tone of defiance? A week ago I had but to express a wish, to have it obeyed as a matter of course.

Ch. Belvawney, it may not be denied that there was a time when, owing to the remarkable influence exercised over me by

your extraordinary eyes, you could do with me as you would. It would be affectation to deny it; your eyes withered my will; they paralyzed my volition. They were strange and lurid eyes, and I bowed to them. Those eyes were my Fate—my Destiny —my unerring Must—my inevitable Shall. That time has gone—for ever!

Bel. Alas for the days that are past and the good that came and went with them!

Ch. Weep for them if you will. I cannot weep with you, for I loved them not. But, as you say, they are past. The light that lit up those eyes is extinct—their fire has died out—their soul has fled. They are no longer eyes, they are poached eggs. I have not yet sunk so low as to be the slave of two poached eggs.

Bel. Have mercy. If any girl has succeeded in enslaving you—and I know how easily you are enslaved—dismiss her from your thoughts; have no more to say to her; and I will—yes, I will bless you with my latest breath!

Ch. Whether a blessing conferred with one's latest breath is a superior article to one conferred in robust health we need not stop to inquire. I decline, as I said before, to admit you to my confidence on any terms whatever. Begone! (*Exit* BELVAWNEY.) Dismiss from my thoughts the only woman I ever loved! Have no more to say to the tree upon which the fruit of my heart is growing! No, Belvawney, I cannot cut off my tree as if it were gas or water. I do not treat women like that. Some men do, but I don't. I am not that sort of man. I respect women; I love women. They are good; they are pure; they are beautiful; at least, many of them are.

Enter MAGGIE *from cottage: he is much fascinated.*

This one, for example, is very beautiful indeed!

Mag. If ye'll just walk in, sir, ye'll find a bannock and a pan o' parritch waitin' for ye on the table.

Ch. This is one of the loveliest women I ever met in the whole course of my life!

Mag. (*aside*). What's he glowerin' at? (*Aloud.*) Oh, sir, ye mean no harm to the poor Lowland lassie?

Ch. Pardon me; it's very foolish. I can't account for it—but I am arrested, fascinated.

Mag. Oh, gude sir, what's fascinated ye?

Ch. I don't know; there is something about you that exercises a most remarkable influence over me; it seems to

weave a kind of enchantment around me. I can't think what it is. You are a good girl, I am sure. None but a good girl could so powerfully affect me. You *are* a good girl, are you not?

Mag. I am a varra gude girl indeed, sir.

Ch. I was quite sure of it. (*Gets his arm round her waist.*)

Mag. I am a much better girl than nineteen out of twenty in these pairts. And they are all gude girls too.

Ch. My darling! (*Kisses her.*)

Mag. Oh, kind sir, what's that for?

Ch. It is your reward for being a good girl.

Mag. Oh, sir, I did na look for sic a recompense; you are varra varra kind to puir little Maggie Macfarlane.

Ch. I cannot think what it is about you that fascinates me so remarkably.

Mag. Maybe it's my beauty.

Ch. Maybe it is. It is quite possible that it may be, as you say, your beauty.

Mag. I am remarkably pretty, and I've a varra neat figure.

Ch. There is a natural modesty in this guileless appreciation of your own perfection that is, to me, infinitely more charming than the affected ignorance of an artificial town-bred beauty.

Mag. Oh, sir, can I close my een to the picture that my looking-glass holds up to me twenty times a day? We see the rose on the tree, and we say that it is fair; we see the silver moon sailing in the braw blue heavens, and we say that she is bright; we see the brawling stream purling over the smooth stanes i' the burn, and we say that it is beautiful; and shall we close our een to the fairest of nature's works—a pure and beautiful woman? Why, sir, it wad just be base ingratitude! No, it's best to tell the truth about a' things: I am a varra, varra, beautiful girl!

Ch. Maggie Macfarlane, I'm a plain, blunt, straightforward man, and I come quickly to the point. I see more to love in you than I ever saw in any woman in all my life before. I have a large income, which I do not spend recklessly. I love you passionately; you are the essence of every hope; you are the tree upon which the fruit of my heart is growing—my Past, my Present, my Future—you are my own To Come. Tell me, will you be mine—will you join your life with mine?

Enter ANGUS, *who listens.*

Mag. Ah, kind sir, I'm sairly grieved to wound sae true and tender a love as yours, but ye're ower late, my love is nae my

ain to give ye, it's given ower to the best and bravest lad in a' the bonnie Borderland!

Ch. Give me his address that I may go and curse him!

Mag. (*kneels to* HILL). Ah, ye must not curse him. Oh-spare him, spare him, for he is good and brave, and he loves me, oh, sae dearly, and I love him, oh, sae dearly too. Oh, sir, kind sir, have mercy on him, and do not—do not curse him, or I shall die! (*Throwing herself at his feet.*)

Ch. Will you, or will you not, oblige me by telling me where he is, that I may at once go and curse him?

Ang. (*coming forward*). He is here, sir, but dinna waste your curses on me. Maggie, my bairn (*raising her*), I heard the answer ye gave to this man, my true and gentle lassie! Ye spake well and bravely, Meg—well and bravely! Dinna heed the water in my e'e—it's a tear of joy and gratitude, Meg—a tear of joy and gratitude!

Ch. (*touched*). Poor fellow! I will *not* curse him! (*Aloud.*) Young man, I respect your honest emotion. I don't want to distress you, but I cannot help loving this most charming girl. Come, is it reasonable to quarrel with a man because he's of the same way of thinking as yourself?

Ang. Nay, sir, I'm nae fasht, but it just seems to drive a' the bluid back into my hairt when I think that my Meg is loved by anither! Oh, sir, she's a fair and winsome lassie, and I micht as justly be angry wi' ye for loving the blue heavens! She's just as far above us as they are! (*Wiping his eyes and kissing her.*)

Ch. (*with decision*). Pardon me, I cannot allow that.

Ang. Eh?

Ch. I love that girl madly—passionately—and I cannot possibly allow you to do that—not before my eyes, I beg. You simply torture me.

Mag. (*to Ang.*). Leave, off, dear, till the puir gentleman's gone, and then ye can begin again.

Ch. Angus, listen to me. You love this girl?

Ang. I love her, sir, a'most as weel as I love mysel'!

Ch. Then reflect how you are standing in the way of her prosperity. I am a rich man. I have money, position, and education. I am a much more intellectual and generally agreeable companion for her than you can ever hope to be. I am full of anecdote, and all my anecdotes are in the best possible taste. I will tell you some of them some of these days, and you can judge for yourself. Maggie, if she married me, would live in a nice house in a good square. She would have wine—

occasionally. She would be kept beautifully clean. Now, if you really love this girl almost as well as you love yourself, are you doing wisely or kindly in standing in the way of her getting all these good things? As to compensation—why, I've had heavy expenses of late—but if—yes, if thirty shillings——

Ang. (*hotly*). Sir, I'm puir in pocket, but I've a rich hairt. It is rich in a pure and overflowing love, and he that hath love hath all. You canna ken what true love is, or you wadna dare to insult a puir but honest lad by offering to buy his treasure for money. (CHEVIOT *retires up.*)

Mag. My ain true darling! (*They embrace.*)

Ch. Now, I'll not have it! Understand me, I'll not have it. It's simple agony to me. Angus, I respect your indignation, but you are too hasty. I do not offer to buy your treasure for money. You love her; it will naturally cause you pain to part with her, and I prescribe thirty shillings, not as a cure, but as a temporary solace. If thirty shillings is not enough, why, I don't mind making it two pounds.

Ang. Nae, sir, it's useless, and we ken it weel, do we not, my brave lassie? Our hearts are one as our bodies will be some day; and the man is na born, and the gold is na coined, that can set us twain asunder!

Mag. Angus, dear, I'm varra proud o' sae staunch and true a love; it's like your ain true self, an' I can say nae more for it than that. But dinna act wi'out prudence and forethought, dear. In these hard times twa pound is twa pound, and I'm nae sure that ye're acting richtly in refusing sae large a sum. I love you varra dearly—ye ken that right weel—an' if ye'll be troubled wi' sic a poor little mousie I'll mak' ye a true an' loving wife, but I doubt whether, wi' a' my love, I'll ever be worth as much to ye as twa pound. Dinna act in haste, dear; tak' time to think before ye refuse this kind gentleman's offer.

Ang. Oh, sir, is not this rare modesty? Could ye match it amang your toun-bred fine ladies? I think not! Meg, it shall be as you say. I'll tak' the siller, but it'll be wi' a sair and broken hairt! (CHEVIOT *gives* ANGUS *money.*) Fare thee weel, my love—my childhood's—boyhood's—manhood's love! Ye're ganging fra my hairt to anither, who'll gie thee mair o' the gude things o' this world than I could ever gie 'ee, except love, an' o' that my hairt is full indeed! But it's a' for the best; ye'll be happier wi' him—and twa pound is twa pound. Meg, mak' him a gude wife, be true to him, and love him as ye loved me. Oh, Meg, my poor bruised hairt is well nigh like to break!

[*Exit into cottage, in great agony.*

Mag. (*looking wistfully after him*). Puir laddie, puir laddie! Oh, I did na ken till noo how weel he loved me!

Ch. Maggie, I'm almost sorry I—poor lad, poor fellow! He has a generous heart. I am glad I did not curse him. (*Aside.*) This is weakness! (*Aloud.*) Maggie my own—ever and for always my own, we will be very happy, will we not?

Mag. Oh, sir, I dinna ken, but in truth I hope so. Oh, sir, my happiness is in your hands noo; be kind to the puir cottage lassie who loves ye sae weel; my hairt is a' your ain, and if ye forsake me my lot will be a sair one indeed!

[*Exit, weeping, into cottage.*

Ch. Poor little Lowland lassie! That's my idea of a wife. No ridiculous extravagance; no expensive tastes. Knows how to dress like a lady on £5 a year; ah, and does it too! No pretence there of being blind to her own beauties; she knows that she is beautiful, and scorns to lie about it. In that respect she resembles Symperson's dear daughter, Minnie. My darling Minnie. (*Looks at miniature.*) My own darling Minnie. Minnie is fair, Maggie is dark. Maggie loves me! That excellent and perfect country creature loves me! She is to be the light of my life, my own to come! In some respects she is even prettier than Minnie—my darling Minnie, Symperson's dear daughter, the tree upon which the fruit of my heart is growing; my Past, my Present, and my Future, my own To Come! But this tendency to reverie is growing on me; I must shake it off.

Enter Miss Treherne.

Heaven and earth, what a singularly lovely girl!

Miss T. A stranger! Pardon me, I will withdraw!—

Ch. A stranger indeed, in one sense, inasmuch as he never had the happiness of meeting you before—but, in that he has a heart that can sympathize with another's misfortune, he trusts he may claim to be regarded almost as a friend.

Miss T. May I ask, sir, to what misfortunes you allude?

Ch. I—a—do not know their precise nature, but that perception would indeed be dull, and that heart would be indeed flinty, that did not at once perceive that you are very very unhappy. Accept, madam, my deepest and most respectful sympathy.

Miss T. You have guessed rightly, sir! I am indeed a most unhappy woman.

Ch. I am delighted to hear it—a—I mean I feel a pleasure, a melancholy and chastened pleasure, in reflecting that, if your distress is not of a pecuniary nature, it may perchance lay in my power to alleviate your sorrow.

Miss T. Impossible, sir, though I thank you for your respectful sympathy.

Ch. How many women would forego twenty years of their lives to be as beautiful as yourself, little dreaming that extraordinary loveliness can co-exist with the most poignant anguish of mind! But so, too often, we find it, do we not, dear lady?

Miss T. Sir! this tone of address, from a complete stranger!

Ch. Nay, be not unreasonably severe upon an impassionable and impulsive man, whose tongue is but the too faithful herald of his heart. We see the rose on the tree, and we say that it is fair, we see the bonnie brooks purling over the smooth stanes—I should say stones—in the burn, and we say that it is beautiful, and shall we close our eyes to the fairest of nature's works, a pure and beautiful woman? Why, it would be base ingratitude, indeed!

Miss T. I cannot deny that there is much truth in the sentiments you so beautifully express, but I am, unhappily, too well aware that, whatever advantages I may possess, personal beauty is not among their number.

Ch. How exquisitely modest is this chaste insensibility to your own singular loveliness! How infinitely more winning than the bold-faced self-appreciation of under-bred country girls!

Miss T. I am glad, sir, that you are pleased with my modesty. It has often been admired.

Ch. Pleased! I am more than pleased—that's a very weak word. I am enchanted. Madam, I am a man of quick impulse and energetic action. I feel and I speak—I cannot help it. Madam, be not surprised when I tell you that I cannot resist the conviction that you are the light of my future life, the essence of every hope, the tree upon which the fruit of my heart is growing—my Past, my Present, my Future, my own To Come! Do not extinguish that light, do not disperse that essence, do not blight that tree! I am well off; I'm a bachelor; I'm thirty-two; and I love you, madam, humbly, truly, trustfully, patiently. Paralyzed with admiration, I wait anxiously, and yet hopefully, for your reply.

Miss T. Sir, that heart would indeed be cold that did not feel grateful for so much earnest, single-hearted devotion. I am deeply grieved to have to say one word to cause pain to one who expresses himself in such well-chosen terms of respectful esteem; but, alas! I have already yielded up my heart to one who, if I mistake not, is a dear personal friend of your own.

Ch. Am I to understand that you are the young lady of property whom Belvawney hopes to marry?

Miss T. I am, indeed, that unhappy woman!

Ch. And is it possible that you love him?

Miss T. With a rapture that thrills every fibre of my heart —with a devotion that enthralls my very soul! But there's some difficulty about his settlements.

Ch. A difficulty! I should think there was. Why, on my marrying, his entire income goes over to Symperson! I could reduce him to penury to-morrow. As it happens, I *am* engaged, I recollect, to Symperson's daughter; and if Belvawney dares to interpose between you and me, by George, I'll do it!

Miss T. Oh, spare him, sir! You say that you love me? Then, for my sake, remain single for ever—it is all I ask, it is not much. Promise me that you will never, never marry, and we will both bless you with our latest breath!

Ch. There seems to be a special importance attached to a blessing conferred with one's latest breath that I entirely fail to grasp. It seems to me to convey no definite advantage of any kind whatever.

Miss T. Cruel, cruel man!

Enter BELVAWNEY, *in great alarm.*

Bel. We are lost!—we are lost!

Miss T. What do you mean?

Ch. Who has lost you?

Bel. Major McGillicuddy discovered your flight, and followed in the next train. The line is blocked through our accident, and his train has pulled up within a few yards of our own. He is now making his way to this very cottage! What do you say to that?

Miss T. I agree with you, we are lost!

Ch. I disagree with you; I should say you are found.

Bel. This man is a reckless fire-eater; he is jealous of me. He will assuredly shoot us both if he sees us here together. I am no coward—but—I confess I am uneasy.

Miss T. (*to Cheviot*). Oh, sir, you have a ready wit; help us out of this difficulty, and we will both bless you——

Bel. With our latest breath!

Ch. That decides me. Madam, remain here with me. Belvawney, withdraw. (BELVAWNEY *retires.*) I will deal with this maniac alone. All I ask is, that if I find it necessary to make a statement that is not consistent with strict truth, you, madam, will unhesitatingly endorse it?

Miss T. I will stake my very existence on its veracity, whatever it may be.

Ch. Good. He is at hand. Belvawney, go.

[*Exit* BELVAWNEY.

Now, madam, repose upon my shoulders, place your arms around me so—is that comfortable?

Miss T. It is luxurious.

Ch. Good.

Miss T. You are sure it does not inconvenience you?

Ch. Not at all. Go back, I like it. Now we are ready for him.

Enter MCGILLICUDDY *with two friends dressed as for a wedding, with white favours.* MCGILLICUDDY *has pistols. All greatly excited.*

McG. Where is the villain? I'll swear he is concealed somewhere. Search every tree, every bush, every geranium. Ha! they are here. Perjured woman! I've found you at last.

Miss T. (*to* CHEVIOT). Save me!

[BELVAWNEY *appears at back, listening.*

McG. Who is the unsightly scoundrel with whom you have flown—the unpleasant-looking scamp whom you have dared to prefer to me? Uncurl yourself from around the plain villain at once, unless you would share his fate.

[MAGGIE *and* ANGUS *appear from cottage.*

Miss T. Major, spare him!

Ch. Now, sir, perhaps you will be so good as to explain who the deuce you are, and what you want with this lady?

McG. I don't know who you may be, but I'm McGillicuddy. I am betrothed to this lady; we were to have been married this morning. I waited for her at the church from ten till four, then I began to get impatient.

Ch. I really think you must be labouring under some delusion.

McG. Delusion? Ha! ha! (*Two friends produce large wedding cake.*) Here's the cake!

Ch. Still I think there's a mistake somewhere. This lady is my wife.

McG. What! Belinda! Oh, Belinda! Tell me that this unattractive man lies; tell me that you are mine and only mine, now and for ever!

Miss T. I cannot say that. This gentleman is my husband!

[MCGILLICUDDY *falls sobbing on seat;* BELVAWNEY *tears his hair in despair;* MAGGIE *sobs on* ANGUS'S *shoulder.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Double Drawing-room in Symperson's House. Indications that a wedding is about to take place. A plate of tarts and a bottle of wine on table.*

Enter MINNIE SYMPERSON, *in wedding dress, followed by* PARKER, *her maid, holding her train.*

Min. Take care, Parker—that's right. There! How do I look?

Par. Beautiful, miss; quite beautiful.

Min. (*earnestly*). Oh, Parker, am I really beautiful? Really, *really* beautiful, you know?

Par. Oh, miss, there's no question about it. Oh, I do so hope you and Mr. Cheviot Hill will be happy.

Min. Oh, I'm sure we shall, Parker. He has often told me that I am the tree upon which the fruit of his heart is growing; and one couldn't wish to be more than *that*. And he tells me that his greatest happiness is to see me happy. So it will be my duty—my *duty*, Parker—to devote my life, my whole life, to making myself as happy as I possibly can.

Enter SYMPERSON, *dressed for wedding.*

Sym. So, my little lamb is ready for the sacrifice. You can go, Parker. And I am to lose my pet at last; my little dickey-bird is to be married to-day! Well, well, it's for her good. I must try and bear it—I must try and bear it.

Min. And as my dear old papa comes into £1000 a year by it, I hope he won't allow it to distress him too much. He must try and bear up. He mustn't fret.

Sym. My child, I will not deny that £1000 a year is a consolation. It's quite a fortune. I hardly know what I shall do with it.

Min. I think, dear papa, you will spend a good deal of it on brandy, and a good deal more on billiards, and a good deal more on betting.

Sym. It may be so: I don't say it won't. We shall see, Minnie, we shall see. These simple pleasures would certainly

tend to soothe your poor old father's declining years. And my darling has not done badly either, has she?

Min. No, dear papa; only fancy! Cheviot has £2000 a year from shares in the Royal Indestructible Bank.

Sym. And don't spend £200. By-the-bye, I'm sorry that my little bird has not contrived to induce him to settle anything on her; that, I think, was remiss in my tom-tit.

Min. Dear papa, Cheviot is the very soul of honour; he's a fine, noble, manly, spirited fellow, but if he *has* a fault, it is that he is very, oh very, *very* stingy. He would rather lose his heart's blood than part with a shilling unnecessarily. He's a noble fellow, but he's like that.

Sym. Still I can't help feeling that if my robin had worked him judiciously ——

Min. Papa, dear, Cheviot is an all but perfect character, the very type of knightly chivalry; but he *has* faults, and among other things he's one of the worst tempered men I ever met in all my little life. Poor, simple, little Minnie, thought the matter over very carefully in her silly childish way, and she came to the conclusion, in her foolish little noddle, that, on the whole, perhaps she could work it better after marriage, than before.

Sym. Well, well, perhaps my wren is right. (*Rises.*)

Min. Don't laugh at my silly little thoughts, dear papa, when I say I'm sure she is.

Sym. Minnie, my dear daughter, take a father's advice, the last he will ever be entitled to give you. If you would be truly happy in the married state, be sure you have your own way in everything. Brook no contradictions. Never yield to outside pressure. Give in to no argument. Admit no appeal. However wrong you may be, maintain a firm, resolute, and determined front. These were your angel mother's principles through life, and she was a happy woman indeed. I neglected those principles, and while she lived I was a miserable wretch.

Min. Papa dear, I have thought over the matter very carefully in my little baby-noddle, and I have come to the conclusion—don't laugh at me, dear papa—that it is my duty—my *duty*—to fall in with Cheviot's views in everything *before* marriage, and Cheviot's duty to fall into my views in everything *after* marriage. I think that is only fair, don't you?

Sym. Yes, I dare say it will come to that.

Min. Don't think me a very silly little goose when I say I'm sure it will. Quite, quite sure, dear papa. Quite.

[*Exit* MINNIE.

Sym. Dear child—dear child! I sometimes fancy I can see traces of her angel mother's disposition in her. Yes, I think—I *think* she will be happy. But, poor Cheviot! Oh, lor, poor Cheviot! Dear me, it won't bear thinking of!

Enter Miss Treherne, *unobserved. She is dressed in stately and funereal black.*

Miss T. Come here, man-servant. Approach. I'm not going to bite you. Can I see the fair young thing they call Minnie Symperson?

Sym. Well really, I can hardly say. There's nothing wrong, I hope?

Miss T. Nothing wrong? Oh, thoughtless, frivolous, light-hearted creature! Oh, reckless old butterfly! Nothing wrong! You've eyes in your head, a nose on your face, ears on each side of it, a brain of some sort in your skull, haven't you, butler?

Sym. Undoubtedly, but I beg to observe I'm not the——

Miss T. Have you or have you not the gift of simple apprehension? Can you or can you not draw conclusions? Go to, go to, you offend me.

Sym. (*aside*). There *is* something wrong, and it's *here* (*touching his forehead*). I'll tell her you're here. Whom shall I say?

Miss T. Say that one on whose devoted head the black sorrows of a long lifetime have fallen, even as a funeral pall, craves a minute's interview with a dear old friend. Do you think you can recollect that message, butler?

Sym. I'll try, but I beg, I *beg* to observe, I'm not the butler. (*Aside.*) This is a most surprising young person! [*Exit.*

Miss T. At last I'm in my darling's home, the home of the bright blythe carolling thing that lit, as with a ray of heaven's sunlight, the murky gloom of my miserable school-days. But what do I see? Tarts? Ginger wine? There are rejoicings of some kind afoot. Alas, I am out of place here. What have I in common with tarts? Oh, I am ill-attuned to scenes of revelry! (*Takes a tart and eats it.*)

Enter Minnie.

Min. Belinda! (*They rush to each other's arms.*)

Miss T. Minnie! My own long-lost lamb! This is the first gleam of joy that has lighted my darksome course this many

and many a day! And in spite of the change that time and misery have brought upon me, you knew me at once! (*Eating the tart all this time.*)

Min. Oh, I felt sure it was you, from the message.

Miss T. How wondrously fair you have grown! And this dress! Why, it is surely a bridal dress! Those tarts—that wine! Surely this is not your wedding-day?

Min. Yes, dear, I shall be married in half an hour.

Miss T. Oh, strange chance! Oh, unheard-of coincidence! Married! And to whom?

Min. Oh, to the dearest love—My cousin, Mr. Cheviot Hill. Perhaps you know the name?

Miss T. I have heard of the Cheviot Hills, somewhere. Happy—strangely happy girl! You, at least, know your husband's name.

Min. Oh yes, it's on all his pocket-handkerchiefs.

Miss T. It is much to know. I do not know mine.

Min. Have you forgotten it?

Miss T. No; I never knew it. It is a dark mystery. It may not be unfathomed. It is buried in the fathomless gulf of the Eternal Past. There let it lie.

Min. Oh, tell me all about it, dear.

Miss T. It is a lurid tale. Three months since I fled from a hated one, who was to have married me. He pursued me. I confided my distress to a young and wealthy stranger. Acting on his advice, I declared myself to be his wife; he declared himself to be my husband. We were parted immediately afterwards, and we have never met since. But this took place in Scotland; and by the law of that remarkable country we are man and wife, though I didn't know it at the time.

Min. What fun!

Miss T. Fun! Say, rather, horror—distraction—chaos! I am rent with conflicting doubts! Perhaps he was already married; in that case, I am a bigamist. Maybe he is dead; in that case, I am a widow. Maybe he is alive; in that case, I am a wife. What am I? Am I single? Am I married? Am I a widow? Can I marry? Have I married? May I marry? Who am I? Where am I? What am I?—What is my name? What is my condition in life? If I am married, to whom am I married? If I am a widow, how came I to be a widow, and whose widow came I to be? Why am I his widow? What did he die of? Did he leave me anything? if anything, how much, and is it saddled with conditions?—Can I marry again without forfeiting it? Have I a mother-in-law?

Have I a family of step-children, and if so, how many, and what are their ages, sexes, sizes, names and dispositions? These are questions that rack me night and day, and until they are settled, peace and I are not on terms!

Min. Poor dear thing!

Miss T. But enough of my selfish sorrows. (*Goes up to table and takes a tart.* MINNIE *is annoyed at this.*) Tell me about the noble boy who is about to make you his. Has he any dross?

Min. I don't know. (*Secretly removes tarts to another table close to door.*) I never thought of asking—I'm such a goose But papa knows.

Miss T. Have those base and servile things called settlements been satisfactorily adjusted? (*Eating.*)

Min. I don't know. It never occurred to me to inquire. But papa can tell you.

Miss T. The same artless little soul!

Min. (*standing so as to conceal tarts from* BELINDA). Yes, I am quite artless—quite, quite artless. But now that you *are* here you will stay and see me married.

Miss T. I would willingly be a witness to my darling's joy, but this attire is, perhaps, scarcely in harmony with a scene of revelry.

Min. Well, dear, you're not a cheerful object, and that's the truth.

Miss T. And yet these charnel-house rags may serve to remind the thoughtless banquetters that they are but mortal.

Min. I don't think it will be necessary to do that, dear. Papa's sherry will make *that* quite clear to them.

Miss T. Then I will hie me home, and array me in garments of less sombre hue.

Min. I think it would be better, dear. Those are the very things for a funeral, but this is a wedding.

Miss T. I see very little difference between them. But it shall be as you wish, though I have worn nothing but black since my miserable marriage. There is breakfast, I suppose?

Min. Yes, at dear Cheviot's house.

Miss T. That is well. I shall return in time for it. Thank heaven I can still eat! (*Takes a tart from table, and exit, followed by* MINNIE.)

Enter CHEVIOT HILL. *He is dressed as for a wedding.*

Ch. Here I am at last—quite flurried and hot after the usual row with the cabman, just when I wanted to be particularly

calm and self-contained. I got the best of it though. Dear me, this is a great day for me—a great day. Where's Minnie, I wonder? Arraying herself for the sacrifice, no doubt. Pouf! This is a very nervous occasion. I wonder if I'm taking a prudent step. Marriage is a very risky thing; it's like Chancery, once in it you can't get out of it, and the costs are enormous. There you are—fixed. Fifty years hence, if we're both alive, there we shall both be—fixed. That's the devil of it. It's an unreasonably long time to be responsible for another person's expenses. I don't see the use of making it for as long as that. It seems greedy to take up half a century of another person's attention. Besides—one never knows—one might come across somebody else one liked better—that uncommonly nice girl I met in Scotland, for instance. No, no, I shall be true to my Minnie—quite true. I am quite determined that nothing shall shake my constancy to Minnie.

Enter PARKER.

What a devilish pretty girl!

Par. (*aside*). He's a mean young man, but he ought to be good for half-a-crown to-day.

Ch. Come here, my dear; a—How do I look?

Par. Very nice indeed, sir.

Ch. What, really?

Par. Really.

Ch. What, tempting, eh?

Par. Very tempting indeed.

Ch. Hah! The married state is an enviable state, Parker.

Par. Is it, sir? I hope it may be. It depends.

Ch. What do you mean by "it depends?" You're a member of the Church of England, I trust? Then don't you know that in saying "it depends" you are flying in the face of the marriage service? Don't go and throw cold water on the married state, Parker. I know what you're going to say—it s expensive. So it is, at first, very expensive, but with economy you soon retrench that. By a beautiful provision of Nature, what's enough for one is enough for two. This phenomenon points directly to the married state as our natural state.

Par. Oh, for that matter, sir, a tigress would get on with you. You're so liberal, so gentle, so—there's only one word for it—dove-like.

Ch. What, you've remarked that, eh? Ha! ha! But dove-like as I am, Parker, in some respects, yet (*getting his arm*

round her) in other respects—(*aside*), deuced pretty girl!—in other respects I am a man, Parker, of a strangely impetuous and headstrong nature. I don't beat about the bush; I come quickly to the point. Shall I tell you a secret? There's something about you, I don't know what it is, that—in other words, you are the tree upon which—no, no, damn it, Cheviot—not to-day, not to-day.

Par. What a way you have with you, sir!

Ch. What, you've noticed that, have you? Ha! ha! yes, I have a way, no doubt; it's been remarked before. Whenever I see a pretty girl (and you are a very pretty girl) I can't help putting my arm like that (*putting it round her waist.*) Now, pleasant as this sort of thing is, and you find it pleasant, don't you? (PARKER *nods.*) Yes, you find it pleasant—pleasant as it is, it is decidedly wrong.

Par. It is decidedly wrong in a married man.

Ch. It is decidedly wrong in a married man. In a married man it's abominable, and I shall be a married man in half an hour. So, Parker, it will become necessary to conquer this tendency, to struggle with it, and subdue it—in half an hour (*getting more affectionate*). Not that there's any real harm in putting your arm round a girl's waist. Highly respectable people do it, when they waltz.

Par. Yes, sir, but then a band's playing.

Ch. True, and when a band's playing it don't matter, but when a band is *not* playing, why it's dangerous, you see. You begin with this, and you go on from one thing to another, getting more and more affectionate, until you reach *this* stage (*kissing her*). Not that there's any real harm in kissing, either; for you see fathers and mothers, who ought to set a good example, kissing their children every day.

Par. Lor, sir, kissing's nothing; everybody does that.

Ch. That is your experience, is it? It tallies with my own. Take it that I am your father, you are my daughter—or take it even that I am merely your husband, and you my wife, and it would be expected of me. (*Kissing her.*)

Par. But I'm not your wife, sir.

Ch. No, not yet, that's very true, and, of course, makes a difference. That's why I say I must subdue this tendency; I must struggle with it; I must conquer it—in half-an-hour.

Min. (*without*). Parker, where's Mr. Cheviot?

Ch. There is your mistress, my dear—she's coming. Will you excuse me? (*Releasing her.*) Thank you. Good day, Parker.

Par. (*disgusted*). Not so much as a shilling; and that man's worth thousands! [*Exit* PARKER.

Enter MINNIE.

Ch. My darling Minnie—my own, own To Come! (*Kissing her.*)

Min. Oh, you mustn't crush me, Cheviot, you'll spoil my dress. How do you like it?

Ch. It's lovely. It's a beautiful material.

Min. Yes; dear papa's been going it.

Ch. Oh, but you're indebted to me for that beautiful dress.

Min. To you! Oh, thank you—thank you!

Ch. Yes. I said to your papa, "Now do for once let the girl have a nice dress; be liberal; buy the very best that money will procure, you'll never miss it. So, thanks to me, he bought you a beauty. Seventeen and six a yard if it's a penny. Dear me! To think that in half-an-hour this magnificent dress will be *my* property!

Min. Yes. Dear papa said that as you had offered to give the breakfast at your house, he would give me the best dress that money could procure.

Ch. Yes, I *did* offer to provide the breakfast in a reckless moment; that's so like me. It was a rash offer, but I've made it, and I've stuck to it. Oh, then, there's the cake.

Min. Oh, tell me all about the cake.

Ch. It's a very pretty cake. Very little cake is eaten at a wedding breakfast, so I've ordered what's known in the trade as the three-quarter article.

Min. I see; three-quarters cake, and the rest wood.

Ch. No; three-quarters wood, the rest cake. Be sure, my dear, you don't cut into the wood, for it has to be returned to the pastrycook to be filled up with cake for another occasion. *I* thought at first of ordering a seven-eighths article; but one isn't married every day—it's only once a year—I mean it's only now and then. So I said, "Hang the expense; let's do the thing well." And so it's a three-quarters.

Min. How good you are to me! We shall be very happy, shall we not?

Ch. I—I hope so—yes. I *hope* so. Playfully happy, like two little kittens.

Min. That will be delightful.

Ch. Economically happy, like two sensible people.

Min. Oh, we must be very economical.

Ch. No vulgar display; no pandering to a jaded appetite. A refined and economical elegance; that is what we must aim at. A simple mutton chop, nicely broiled, for you; and *two* simple mutton chops, *very* nicely broiled, for me—

Min. And some flowery potatoes—

Ch. A loaf of nice household bread—

Min. A stick of celery—

Ch. And a bit of cheese, and you've a dinner fit for a monarch.

Min. Then how shall we spend our evenings?

Ch. We'll have pleasant little fireside games. Are you fond of fireside games?

Min. Oh, they're great fun.

Ch. Then we'll play at tailoring.

Min. Tailoring? I don't think I know that game.

Ch. It's a very good game. You shall be the clever little jobbing tailor, and I'll be the particular customer who brings his own materials to be made up. You shall take my measure, cut out the cloth (real cloth, you know), stitch it together, and try it on; and then I'll find fault like a real customer, and you shall alter it until it fits, and when it fits beautifully that counts one to you.

Min. Delightful!

Ch. Then there's another little fireside game which is great fun. We each take a bit of paper and a pencil and try who can jot down the nicest dinner for ninepence, and the next day we have it.

Min. Oh, Cheviot, what a paradise you hold open to me!

Ch. Yes. How's papa?

Min. He's very well and very happy. He's going to increase his establishment on the strength of the £1000 a year, and keep a manservant.

Ch. I know. I've been looking after some servants for him; they'll be here in the course of the morning. A cook, a housemaid, and a footman. I found them through an advertisement. They're country people, and will come very cheap.

Min. How kind and thoughtful you are! Oh, Cheviot, I'm a very lucky girl! [*Exit* MINNIE.

Ch. Yes, I think so too, if I can only repress my tendency to think of that tall girl I met in Scotland! Cheviot, my boy, you must make an effort; you are going to be married, and the tall girl is nothing to you!

Enter PARKER.

Par. Please, sir, here's a gentleman to see you.

Ch. Oh, my solicitor, no doubt. Show him up.

Par. And please, some persons have called to see you about an advertisement.

Ch. Oh, Symperson's servants. To be sure. Show up the gentleman, and tell the others to wait. [*Exit* PARKER.

Enter BELVAWNEY. *He looks very miserable.*

Ch. Belvawney! This is unexpected. (*Much confused.*)

Bel. Yes, Cheviot. At last we meet. Don't, oh don't, frown upon a heartbroken wretch.

Ch. Belvawney, I don't want to hurt your feelings, but I will not disguise from you that, not having seen you for three months, I was in hopes that I had got rid of you for ever.

Bel. Oh, Cheviot, don't say that, I am so unhappy. And you have it in your power to make me comfortable. Do this, and I will bless you with my latest breath!

Ch. It is a tempting offer; I am not proof against it. We all have our price, and that is mine. Proceed.

Bel. Miss Treherne—Belinda—whom I love so dearly, won't have anything to say to me.

Ch. It does her credit. She's a very superior girl.

Bel. It's all through you, Cheviot. She declares that the mutual declaration you made to protect her from McGillicuddy amounts to a Scotch marriage.

Ch. What!!!

Bel. She declares she is your wife. She professes to love me as fondly as ever; but a stern sense of duty to you forbids her to hold any communication with me.

Ch. Oh, but this is absurd, you know!

Bel. Of course it is; but what's to be done? You left with Symperson immediately after making the declaration. As soon as she found you were gone she implored me to tell her your name and address. Of course I refused, and she quitted me, telling me that she would devote her life to finding you out.

Ch. But this is simple madness. I can't have it! This day, too, of all others! If she'd claimed me last week, or even yesterday, I wouldn't have minded, for she's a devilish fine woman; but if she were to turn up now—! (*Aloud.*) Belvawney, my dear friend, tell me what to do—I'll do anything.

Bel. It seems that there's some doubt whether this cottage, which is just on the border, is in England or Scotland. If it is in England, she has no case; if it is in Scotland, I'm afraid she has. I've written to the owner of the property to ascertain, and if, in the mean time, she claims you, you must absolutely decline to recognize this marriage for a moment.

Ch. Not for one moment!

Bel. It was a mere artifice to enable her to escape from McGillicuddy.

Ch. Nothing more!

Bel. It's monstrous—perfectly monstrous—that that should constitute a marriage. It's disgraceful—it's abominable. Damme, Cheviot, it's immoral.

Ch. So it is—it's immoral. That settles it in *my* mind. It's immoral.

Bel. You're quite sure you'll be resolute, Cheviot?

Ch. Resolute? I should think so! Why, hang it all, man, I'm going to be married in twenty minutes to Minnie Symperson!

Bel. What!

Ch. (*confused at having let this out*). Didn't I tell you? I believe you're right; I did *not* tell you. It escaped me. Oh, yes, this is my wedding-day.

Bel. Cheviot, you're joking—you don't mean this! Why, I shall lose £1000 a year by it, every penny I have in the world! Oh, it can't be—it's nonsense!

Ch. What do you mean by nonsense? The married state is an honourable estate, I believe? A man is not looked upon as utterly lost to all sense of decency because he's got married, I'm given to understand! People have been married before this, and have not been irretrievably tabooed in consequence, unless I'm grossly misinformed? Then what the dickens do you mean by saying "nonsense" when I tell you that I'm going to be married?

Bel. Cheviot, be careful how you take this step. Beware how you involve an innocent and helpless girl in social destruction.

Ch. What do you mean, sir?

Bel. You cannot marry; you are a married man.

Ch. Come, come, Belvawney, this is trifling.

Bel. You are married to Miss Treherne. I was present, and can depose to the fact.

Ch. Oh, you're not serious.

Bel. Never more serious in my life.

Ch. But, as you very properly said just now, it was a mere artifice—we didn't mean anything. It would be monstrous to regard that as a marriage. Damme, Belvawney, it would be immoral!

Bel. I may deplore the state of the law, but I cannot stand tamely by and see it deliberately violated before my eyes.

Ch. (*wildly*). But, Belvawney, my dear friend, reflect; everything is prepared for my marriage, at a great expense. I love Minnie deeply, devotedly. She is the actual tree upon which the fruit of my heart is growing. There's no mistake about it. She is my own To Come. I love her madly—rapturously. (*Going on his knees to* BELVAWNEY.) I have prepared a wedding breakfast at a great expense to do her honour. I have ordered four flys for the wedding party. I have taken two second-class Cook's tourists' tickets for Ilfracombe, Devon, Exeter, Cornwall, Westward Ho! and Bideford Bay. The whole thing has cost me some twenty or twenty-five pounds, and all this will be wasted—utterly wasted—if you interfere. Oh, Belvawney, dear Belvawney, let the recollection of our long and dear friendship operate to prevent your shipwrecking my future life. (*Sobbing hysterically.*)

Bel. I have a duty to do. I must do it.

Ch. But reflect, dear Belvawney; if I am married to Miss Treherne, you lose your income as much as if I married Minnie Symperson.

Bel. No doubt, if you could prove your marriage to Miss Treherne. But you can't—— (*With melodramatic intensity.*)

Ch. Those eyes!

Bel. You don't know where she is—— (*With fiendish exultation.*)

Ch. Oh, those eyes!

Bel. The cottage has been pulled down, and the cottagers have emigrated to Patagonia——

Ch. Oh, those eyes!

Bel. I'm the only witness left. *I* can prove your marriage, if I like; but you can't. Ha! ha! ha! ha! (*with Satanic laugh.*) It's a most painful and unfortunate situation for you; and, believe me, dear Cheviot, you have my deepest and most respectful sympathy. [*Exit* BELVAWNEY.

Ch. This is appalling; simply appalling! The cup of happiness dashed from my lips just as I was about to drink a life-long draught. The ladder kicked from under my feet just as I was about to pick the fruit of my heart from the tree upon which it has been growing so long. I'm a married man! More

than that, my honeymoon's past, and I never knew it! Stop a moment, though. The bride can't be found; the cottage is pulled down, and the cottagers have emigrated; what proof is there that such a marriage ever took place? There's only Belvawney, and Belvawney isn't a proof. Corroborated by the three cottagers, his word might be worth something; uncorroborated, it is worthless. I'll risk it. He can do nothing; the bride is nowhere; the cottagers are in Patagonia, and——

[*At this moment* MRS. MACFARLANE, MAGGIE, *and* ANGUS *appear at the back. They stand bobbing and curtsying in rustic fashion to* CHEVIOT (*whom they do not recognize*). *He stares aghast at them for a moment, then staggers back to sofa.*

Ch. The man, the woman, and the girl, by all that's infernal!

Mrs. Mac. Gude day, sir. We've just ca'd to see ye about the advertisement. (*Producing paper.*)

Ch. I don't know you—I don't know you. Go away.

[CHEVIOT *buries his head in a newspaper, and pretends to read on sofa.*

Mag. Ah, sir, ye said that we were to ca' on ye this day at eleven o'clock, and sae we've coom a' the way fra Dumfries to see ye.

Ch. I tell you I don't know you. Go away. I'm not at all well. I'm very ill, and it's infectious.

Ang. We fear no illness, sir. This is Mistress Macfarlane, the gude auld mither, who'll cook the brose and boil the parritch, and sit wi' ye, and nurse ye through your illness till the sad day ye dee! (*Wiping his eye.*)

[CHEVIOT *pokes a hole with his finger through newspaper, and reconnoitres unobserved.*

Mrs. Mac. And this is Meg, my ain lass Meg!

Ch. (*aside*). Attractive girl, very. I remember her perfectly.

Mrs. Mac. And this is Angus Macalister, who's going to marry her, and who'll be mair than a son to me!

Ang. Oh, mither, mither, dinna say it, for ye bring the tear drop to my ee; an' it's no canny for a strong man to be blithering and soughing like a poor weak lassie! (*Wiping his eye.*)

[ANGUS *and* MRS. MACFARLANE *sit.* MAGGIE *advances to hole in newspaper and peeps through.*

Mag. Oh, mither, mither! (*Staggers back into* ANGUS'S *arms.*)

Mrs. Mac. What is it, Meg?

Ang. Meg, my weel lo'ed Meg, my wee wifie that is to be, tell me what's wrang wi' 'ee?

Mag. Oh, mither, it's him; the noble gentleman I plighted my troth to three weary months agone! The gallant Englishman who gave Angus twa golden pound to give me up!

Ang. It's the coward Sassenach who well nigh broke our Meg's heart!

Mrs. Mac. My lass, my lass, dinna greet, maybe he'll marry ye yet.

Ch. (*desperately*). Here's another! Does anybody else want to marry me? Don't be shy. You, ma'am (*to* MRS. MAC.) *you're* a fine woman—perhaps *you* would like to try your luck?

Mag. Ah, sir! I dinna ken your name, but your bonnie face has lived in my twa een, sleeping and waking, three weary, weary months! Oh, sir, ye should na' ha' deceived a trusting, simple Lowland lassie. 'Twas na' weel done—'twas na' weel done! (*Weeping on his shoulder; he puts his arm round her waist.*)

Ch. (*softening*). My good girl, what do you wish me to do? I remember you now perfectly. I *did* admire you very much—in fact, I do still; you're a very charming girl. Let us talk this over, calmly and quietly. (MAG. *moves away.*) No, you needn't go; you can stop there if you like. There, there, my dear! don't fret. (*Aside.*) She *is* a very charming girl. I almost wish I—I really begin to think I—no, no! damn it, Cheviot! not to-day.

Mag. Oh! mither, he told me he loved me!

Ch. So I did. The fact is, when I fell in love with you—don't go my pretty bird—I quite forgot that I was engaged. There, there! I thought at the time that you were the tree upon which the fruit of my heart was growing; but I was mistaken. Don't go; you needn't go on that account. It was another tree—

Mag. Oh, mither, it was anither tree! (*Weeping on* CHEVIOT'S *shoulder.*)

Mrs. Mac. Angus, it was anither tree! (*Weeping on* ANGUS'S *shoulder.*)

Ang. Dinna, mither, dinna; I canna bear it! (*Weeps.*)

Ch. Yes, it was another tree—you can remain there for the present—in point of fact, it was growing on both trees. I don't know how it is, but it seems to grow on a great many trees—a perfect orchard—and you are one of them, my dear. Come, come, don't fret, you are one of them!

Enter MINNIE *and* SYMPERSON.

Min. Cheviot!

Sym. What is all this?

Ch. (*rapidly referring to piece of paper given to him by Mrs. Macfarlane, as if going over a washerwoman's bill.*) "Twenty-four pairs socks, two shirts, thirty-seven collars, one sheet, forty-four nightshirts, twenty-two flannel waistcoats, one white tie." Ridiculous—quite ridiculous—I won't pay it.

Min. Cheviot, who is this person who was found hanging on your neck? Say she is somebody—for instance, your sister or your aunt. Oh, Cheviot, say she is your aunt, I implore you! (*The three cottagers curtsy and bow to* MINNIE.)

Sym. Cheviot, say she is your aunt, I command you.

Ch. Oh, I beg your pardon. I didn't see you. These ladies are—are my washerwomen. Allow me to introduce them. They have come—they have come for their small account. (MAGGIE, *who has been sobbing through this, throws herself hysterically on to* CHEVIOT'S *bosom.*) There's a discrepancy in the items—twenty-two flannel waistcoats are ridiculous, and, in short, some washerwomen are like this when they're contradicted—they can't help it—it's something in the suds: it undermines their constitution.

Sym. (*sternly*). Cheviot, I should like to believe you, but it seems scarcely credible.

Mag. Oh, sir, he's na telling ye truly. I'm the puir Lowland lassie that he stole the hairt out of, three months ago, and promised to marry; and I love him sae weel—sae weel, and now he's married to anither!

Ch. Nothing of the kind. I—

Sym. You are mistaken, and so is your mith—mother. He is not yet married to anith—nother.

Mag. Why, sir, it took place before my very ain eyes, before us a', to a beautiful lady, three months since.

Min. Cheviot, say that this is not true. Say that the beautiful lady was somebody—for instance, your aunt. Oh, say she was your aunt, I implore you!

Sym. (*sternly*). Cheviot, say she was your aunt, I command you!

Ch. Minnie, Symperson, don't believe them—it was no marriage. I don't even know the lady's name—I never saw her before—I've never seen her since. It's ridiculous—I couldn't have married her without knowing it—it's out of the question!

Sym. Cheviot, let's know exactly where we are. I don't much care whom you marry, so that you marry someone—that's enough for me. But please be explicit, for this is business, and mustn't be trifled with. Tell me all about it.

Ch. (*in despair*). I cannot!

Enter BELVAWNEY.

Bel. I can.

Sym. Belvawney!

Bel. I was present when Cheviot and a certain lady declared themselves to be man and wife. This took place in a cottage on the Border—in the presence of these worthy people.

Sym. That's enough for me. It's a Scotch marriage! Minnie, my child, we must find you someone else. Cheviot's married. Belvawney, I am sorry to say, I deprive you of your income.

Bel. I beg your pardon, not yet.

Sym. Why not?

Bel. In the first place, it's not certain whether the cottage was in England or in Scotland; in the second place, the bride can't be found.

Sym. But she *shall* be found. What is her name?

Bel. That I decline to state.

Sym. But you shall be made to state. I insist upon knowing the young lady's name.

Enter MISS TREHERNE, *in a light and cheerful dress.*

Bel. (*amazed*). Belinda Treherne!

Miss T. (*rushing to* MINNIE). Minnie, my own old friend!

Ch. 'Tis she!

Miss T. (*turns and recognizes* CHEVIOT). My husband!

Ch. My wife!

[MISS T. *throws herself at* CHEVIOT'S *feet, kissing his hands rapturously.* BELVAWNEY *staggers back.* MINNIE *faints in her father's arms.* MAGGIE *sobs on* ANGUS'S *breast.*

ACT III.

SCENE, *same as Act II.*

BELVAWNEY *discovered with* MISS TREHERNE *and* MINNIE. *He is singing to them.* MISS TREHERNE *is leaning romantically on piano.* MINNIE *is seated on a stool.*

BEL. (*sings*).

"Says the old Obadiah to the young Obadiah,
I am drier, Obadiah, I am drier."
CHORUS. "I am drier."

BEL.

"Says the young Obadiah to the old Obadiah,
I'm on fire, Obadiah, I'm on fire."
CHORUS. "I'm on fire."

Min. Oh, thank you, Mr. Belvawney. How sweetly pretty that is. Where can I get it?

Miss T. How marvellous is the power of melody over the soul that is fretted and harassed by anxiety and doubt. I can understand how valuable must have been the troubadours of old, in the troublous times of anarchy. Your song has soothed me, sir.

Bel. I am indeed glad to think that I have comforted you a little, dear ladies.

Min. Dear Mr. Belvawney, I don't know what we should have done without you. What with your sweet songs, your amusing riddles, and your clever conjuring tricks, the weary days of waiting have passed like a delightful dream.

Miss T. It is impossible to be dull in the society of one who can charm the soul with plaintive ballads one moment, and the next roll a rabbit and a guinea-pig into one.

Bel. You make me indeed happy, dear ladies. But my joy will be of brief duration, for Cheviot may return at any moment with the news that the fatal cottage was in Scotland, and then —Oh, Belinda, what is to become of me?

Miss T. How many issues depend on that momentous question? Has Belvawney a thousand a year, or is he ruined? Has your father that convenient addition to his income, or has he not? May Maggie marry Angus, or will her claim on Cheviot be satisfied? Are you to be his cherished bride, or are

you destined to a life of solitary maidenhood? Am I Cheviot's honoured wife, or am I but a broken-hearted and desolate spinster? Who can tell! Who can tell! [*Crosses to* MINNIE.

Bel. (*goes to window in second drawing-room*). Here is a cab with luggage—it is Cheviot! He has returned with the news! Ladies—one word before I go. One of you will be claimed by Cheviot, that is very clear. To that one (whichever it may be) I do not address myself—but to the other (whichever it may be), I say, I love you (whichever you are) with a fervour which I cannot describe in words. If you (whichever you are) will consent to cast your lot with mine, I will devote my life to proving that I love you and you only (whichever it may be) with a single-hearted and devoted passion, which precludes the possibility of my ever entertaining the slightest regard for any other woman in the whole world. I thought I would just mention it. Good morning! [*Exit* BELVAWNEY.

Miss T. How beautifully he expresses himself. He is indeed a rare and radiant being.

Min. (*nervously*). Oh, Belinda, the terrible moment is at hand.

Miss T. Minnie, if dear Cheviot should prove to be my husband, swear to me that that will not prevent your coming to stop with us—with dear Cheviot and me—whenever you can.

Min. Indeed I will. And if it should turn out that dear Cheviot is at liberty to marry me, promise me that that will not prevent you looking on our house—on dear Cheviot's and mine—as your home.

Miss T. I swear it. We will be like dear, dear sisters.

Enter CHEVIOT, *as from journey, with bag and rug.*

Miss T. Cheviot, tell me at once—are you my own—husband?

Min. Cheviot, speak—is poor, little, simple Minnie to be your bride?

Ch. Minnie, the hope of my heart, my pet fruit tree! Belinda, my Past, my Present, and my To Come! I have sorry news, sorry news.

Miss T. (*aside*). Sorry news! Then I am *not* his wife.

Min. (*aside*). Sorry news! Then she *is* his wife.

Ch. My dear girls—my very dear girls, my journey has been fruitless—I have no information.

Miss T. and *Min.* No information!

Ch. None. The McQuibbigaskie has gone abroad!

(*Both ladies fall weeping.*)

Miss T. More weary waiting! more weary waiting!

Min. Oh, my breaking heart; oh, my poor bruised and breaking heart!

Ch. We must be patient, dear Belinda. Minnie, my own, we must be patient. After all, is the situation so very terrible? Each of you has an even chance of becoming my wife, and in the mean time I look upon myself as engaged to both of you. I shall make no distinction. I shall love you both, fondly, and you shall both love me. My affection shall be divided equally between you, and we will be as happy as three little birds.

Miss T. (*wiping her eyes*). You are very kind and thoughtful, dear Cheviot.

Min. I believe, in my simple little way, that you are the very best man in the whole world!

Ch. (*deprecatingly*). No, no.

Min. Ah, but do let me think so: it makes me so happy to think so!

Ch. Does it? Well, well, be it so. Perhaps I am! And now tell me, how has the time passed since I left? Have my darlings been dull?

Miss T. We should have been dull indeed but for the airy Belvawney. The sprightly creature has done his best to make the lagging hours fly. He is an entertaining rattlesnake—I should say, rattletrap.

Ch. (*jealous*). Oh, *is* he so? Belvawney has been making the hours fly, has he? I'll make *him* fly, when I catch him!

Min. His conjuring tricks are wonderful!

Ch. Confound his conjuring tricks!

Min. Have you seen him bring a live hen, two hair brushes, and a pound and a half of fresh butter out of his pocket-handkerchief!

Ch. No, I have not had that advantage!

Miss T. It is a thrilling sight.

Ch. So I should be disposed to imagine! Pretty goings on in my absence! you seem to forget that you two girls are engaged to be married to *me*!

Miss T. Ah, Cheviot! do not judge us harshly. We love you with a reckless fervour that thrills us to the very marrow—don't we, darling? But the hours crept heavily without you, and when, to lighten the gloom in which we were plunged, the kindly creature swallowed a live rabbit and brought it out, smothered in onions, from his left boot, we

could not choose but smile. The good soul has promised to teach *me* the trick.

Ch. Has he? That's his confounded impudence. Now, once for all, I'll have nothing of this kind. One of you will be my wife, and until I know which, I will permit no Belvawneying of any kind whatever, or anything approaching thereto. When that is settled, the other may Belvawney until she is black in the face.

Miss T. And how long have we to wait before we shall know which of us may begin Belvawneying?

Ch. I can't say. It may be some time. The McQuibbigaskie has gone to Central Africa. No post can reach him, and he will not return for six years.

Miss T. Six years! Oh, I cannot wait six years! Why in six years I shall be eight-and-twenty!

Min. Six years! Why, in six years the Statute of Limitations will come in, and he can renounce us both.

Miss T. True; you are quite right. (*To Cheviot.*) Cheviot, I have loved you madly, desperately, as other woman never loved other man. This poor inexperienced child, who clings to me as the ivy clings to the oak, also loves you as woman never loved before. Even that poor cottage maiden, whose rustic heart you so recklessly enslaved, worships you with a devotion that has no parallel in the annals of the heart. In return for all this unalloyed affection, all we ask of you is that you will recommend us to a respectable solicitor.

Ch. But, my dear children, reflect—I can't marry all three. I am most willing to consider myself engaged to all three, and that's as much as the law will allow. You see I do all I can. I'd marry all three of you with pleasure, if I might; but, as our laws stand at present, I'm sorry to say—I'm very sorry to say—it's out of the question. [*Exit* CHEVIOT.

Miss T. Poor fellow. He has my tenderest sympathy; but we have no alternative but to place ourselves under the protecting ægis of a jury of our countrymen!

Enter SYMPERSON, *with two letters.*

Sym. Minnie—Miss Treherne—the post has just brought me two letters; one of them bears a Marseilles post-mark, and is, I doubt not, from the McQuibbigaskie! He must have written just before starting for Central Africa!

Min. From the McQuibbigaskie? Oh, read, read!

Miss T. Oh, sir! how can you torture us by this delay? Have you no curiosity?

Sym. Well, my dear, very little on this point; you see it don't much matter to me whom Cheviot marries. So that he marries some one, that's enough for me. But, however, *your* anxiety is natural, and I will gratify it. (*Opens letter and reads.*) "Sir,—In reply to your letter, I have to inform you that Evan Cottage is certainly in England. The deeds relating to the property place this beyond all question."

Min. In England!

Miss T. (*sinking into a chair*). This blow is indeed a crusher Against such a blow I cannot stand up! (*Faints.*)

Min. (*on her knees*). My poor Belinda—my darling sister—love—oh forgive me—oh forgive me! Don't look like that! Speak to me, dearest—oh speak to me—speak to me.

Miss T. (*suddenly springing up*). Speak to you? Yes, I'll speak to you! All is *not* yet lost! True, he is not married to me, but why should he not be? I am as young as you! I am as beautiful as you! I have more money than you! I will try—oh how hard will I try!

Min. Do, darling; and I wish—oh how I wish you may get him!

Miss T. Minnie, if you were not the dearest little friend I have in the world I could pinch you! [*Exit* BELINDA.

Sym. (*who has been reading the other letter*). Dear me—how terrible!

Min. What is terrible, dear papa?

Sym. Belvawney writes to tell me the Indestructible Bank stopped payment yesterday, and Cheviot's shares are waste paper.

Min. Well, upon my word. There's an end of *him!*

Sym. An end of him. What do you mean? You are not going to throw him over?

Min. Dear papa, I am sorry to disappoint you, but unless your tom-tit is very much mistaken, the Indestructible was not registered under the Joint-Stock Companies Act of Sixty-two, and in that case the shareholders are jointly and severally liable to the whole extent of their available capital. Poor little Minnie don't pretend to have a business head; but she's not *quite* such a little donkey as *that*, dear papa.

Sym. You decline to marry him? Do I hear rightly?

Min. I don't know, papa, whether your hearing is as good as it was, but from your excited manner, I should say you heard me perfectly. [*Exit* MINNIE.

Sym. This is a pretty business! Done out of a thousand a year; and by my own daughter! What a terrible thing is this incessant craving after money! Upon my word, some people seem to think that they're sent into the world for no other purpose but to acquire wealth; and, by Jove, they'll sacrifice their nearest and dearest relations to get it. It's most humiliating—most humiliating!

Enter CHEVIOT, *in low spirits.*

Ch. (*throwing himself into a chair; sobs aloud*). Oh Uncle Symperson, have you heard the news?

Sym. (*angrily*). Yes, I *have* heard the news; and a pretty man of business *you* are to invest all your property in an unregistered company!

Ch. Uncle, don't *you* turn against me! Belinda is not my wife! I'm a ruined man; and my darlings—my three darlings, whom I love with a fidelity, which, in these easy-going days, is simply Quixotic—will have nothing to say to me. Minnie, your daughter, declines to accompany me to the altar. Belinda, I feel sure will revert to Belvawney, and Maggie is at this present moment hanging round that Scotch idiot's neck, although she knows that in doing so she simply tortures me. Symperson, I never loved three girls as I loved those three—never! never! and now they'll all three slip through my fingers—I'm sure they will!

Sym. Pooh, pooh, sir. Do you think nobody loses but you? Why, I'm done out of a thousand a year by it.

Ch. (*moodily*). For that matter, Symperson, I've a very vivid idea that you won't have to wait long for the money.

Sym. What d'you mean? Oh—of course—I understand.

Ch. Eh?

Sym. Mrs. Macfarlane! I have thought of her myself. A very fine woman for her years; a majestic ruin, beautiful in decay. My dear boy, my very dear boy, I congratulate you.

Ch. Don't be absurd. I'm not going to marry anybody.

Sym. Eh? Why, then how—? I don't think I quite follow you.

Ch. There is another contingency on which you come into the money. My death.

Sym. To be sure! I never thought of that! And, as you say, a man can die but once.

Ch. I beg your pardon. I didn't say anything of the kind—you said it; but it's true, for all that.

Sym. I'm very sorry; but, of course, if you have made up your mind to it——

Ch. Why, when a man's lost everything, what has he to live for?

Sym. True, true. Nothing whatever. Still——

Ch. His money gone, his credit gone, the three girls he's engaged to gone.

Sym. I cannot deny it. It is a hopeless situation. Hopeless, quite hopeless.

Ch. His happiness wrecked, his hopes blighted; the three trees upon which the fruit of his heart was growing—all cut down. What is left but suicide?

Sym. True, true! You're quite right. Farewell. (*Going.*)

Ch. Symperson, you seem to think I *want* to kill myself. I don't want to do anything of the kind. I'd much rather live—upon my soul I would—if I could think of any reason for living. Symperson, can't you think of *something* to check the heroic impulse which is at this moment urging me to a tremendous act of self-destruction?

Sym. Something! Of course I can! Say that you throw yourself into the Serpentine—which is handy. Well, it's an easy way of going out of the world, I'm told—rather pleasant than otherwise, I believe—quite an agreeable sensation, I'm given to understand. But you—you get wet through; and your—your clothes are absolutely ruined!

Ch. (*mournfully*). For that matter, I could take off my clothes before I went in.

Sym. True, so you could. I never thought of that. You could take them off before you go in—there's no reason why you shouldn't, if you do it in the dark—and *that* objection falls to the ground. Cheviot, my lion-hearted boy, it's impossible to resist your arguments, they are absolutely convincing. (*Shakes his hand.*) [*Exit.*

Ch. Good fellow, Symperson—I like a man who's open to conviction! But it's no use—all my attractions are gone—and I can *not* live unless I feel I'm fascinating. Still, there's one chance left—Belinda! I haven't tried her. Perhaps, after all, she loved me for myself alone! It isn't likely—but it's barely possible.

Enter BELVAWNEY, *who has overheard these words.*

Bel. Out of the question; you are too late! I represented to her that you are never likely to induce any one to marry you

now that you are penniless. She felt that my income was secure, and she gave me her hand and her heart.

Ch. Then all is lost; my last chance is gone, and the irrevocable die is cast! Be happy with her, Belvawney; be happy with her!

Bel. Happy! You shall dine with us after our honeymoon and judge for yourself.

Ch. No, I shall not do that; long before you return I shall be beyond the reach of dinners.

Bel. I understand—you are going abroad. Well, I don't think you could do better than try another country.

Ch. (*tragically*). Belvawney, I'm going to try another world! (*Drawing a pistol from his pocket.*)

Bel. (*alarmed*). What do you mean?

Ch. In two minutes I die!

Bel. You're joking, of course?

Ch. Do I look like a man who jokes? Is my frame of mind one in which a man indulges in trivialities?

Bel. (*in great terror*). But my dear Cheviot, reflect—

Ch. Why should it concern you? You will be happy with Belinda. You will not be well off, but Symperson will, and I dare say he will give you a meal now and then. It will not be a nice meal, but still it will be a meal.

Bel. Cheviot, you mustn't do this; pray reflect; there are interests of magnitude depending on your existence.

Ch. My mind is made up. (*Cocking the pistol.*)

Bel. (*wildly*). But I shall be ruined!

Ch. There is Belinda's fortune.

Bel. She won't have me if I'm ruined! Dear Cheviot, don't do it—it's culpable—it's wrong!

Ch. Life is valueless to me without Belinda. (*Pointing the pistol to his head.*)

Bel. (*desperately*). You shall have Belinda; she is much—very much to me, but she is not everything. Your life is very dear to me; and when I think of our old friendship——! Cheviot, you shall have anything you like, if you'll only consent to live!

Ch. If I thought you were in earnest; but no—no. (*Putting pistol to head.*)

Bel. In earnest? of course I'm in earnest! Why what's the use of Belinda to me if I'm ruined? Why she wouldn't look at me.

Ch. But perhaps if I'm ruined, she wouldn't look at *me*.

Bel. Cheviot, I'll confess all, if you'll only live. You—you are *not* ruined!

Ch. Not ruined?

Bel. Not ruined. I—I invented the statement.

Ch. (*in great delight*). You invented the statement? My dear friend! My very dear friend! I'm very much obliged to you! Oh, thank you, thank you a thousand times! Oh, Belvawney, you have made me very, very happy! (*Sobbing on his shoulder, then suddenly springing up.*) But what the devil did you mean by circulating such a report about me? How dare you do it, sir? Answer me that, sir."

Bel. I did it to gain Belinda's love. I knew that the unselfish creature loved you for your wealth alone.

Ch. It was a liberty, sir; it was a liberty. To put it mildly, it was a liberty.

Bel. It was. You're quite right—that's the word for it—it was a liberty. But I'll go and undeceive her at once.

[*Exit* BELVAWNEY.

Ch. Well, as I've recovered my fortune, and with it my tree, I'm about the happiest fellow in the world. My money, my mistress, and my mistress's money, all my own. I believe I could go mad with joy!

Enter SYMPERSON, *in deep black; he walks pensively, with a white handkerchief to his mouth.*

Ch. What's the matter?

Sym. Hallo! You're still alive?

Ch. Alive? Yes; why (*noticing his dress*), is anything wrong?

Sym. No, no, my dear young friend, these clothes are symbolical; they represent my state of mind. After your terrible threat, which I cannot doubt you intend to put at once into execution——

Ch. My dear uncle, this is very touching; this unmans me. But, cheer up, dear old friend, I have good news for you.

Sym. (*alarmed*). Good news? What do you mean?

Ch. I am about to remove the weight of sorrow which hangs so heavily at your heart. Resume your fancy check trousers—I have consented to live.

Sym. Consented to live? Why, sir, this is confounded trifling. I don't understand this line of conduct at all; you threaten to commit suicide; your friends are dreadfully shocked at first, but eventually their minds become reconciled to the prospect of losing you, they become resigned, even cheerful; and when they have brought themselves to this Christian state

of mind, you coolly inform them that you have changed your mind and mean to live. It's not business, sir—it's not business.

Ch. But, my dear uncle, I've nothing to commit suicide for; I'm a rich man, and Belinda will, no doubt, accept me with joy and gratitude.

Sym. Belinda will do nothing of the kind. She has just left the house with Belvawney, in a cab, and under the most affectionate circumstances.

Ch. (*alarmed*). Left with Belvawney? Where have they gone?

Sym. I don't know. Very likely to get married.

Ch. Married?

Sym. Yes, before the registrar.

Ch. I've been sold! I see that now! Belvawney has done me! But I'm not the kind of man who stands such treatment quietly. Belvawney has found his match. Symperson, they may get married, but, they shall not be happy; I'll be revenged on them both before they're twenty-four hours older. She marries him because she thinks his income is secure. I'll show her she's wrong; I won't blow out my brains; I'll do worse.

Sym. What?

Ch. I'll marry.

Sym. Marry?

Ch. Anybody. I don't care who it is.

Sym. Will Minnie do?

Ch. Minnie will do; send her here.

Sym. In one moment, my dear boy—in one moment!

[*Exit* SYMPERSON, *hurriedly*.

Ch. Belinda alone in a cab with Belvawney! It's maddening to think of it! He's got his arm round her waist at this moment, if I know anything of human nature! I can't stand it—I cannot and I will not stand it! I'll write at once to the registrar and tell him she's married (*sits at writing table and prepares to write*). Oh, why am I constant by disposition? Why is it that when I love a girl I can think of no other girl but that girl, whereas, when a girl loves me she seems to entertain the same degree of affection for mankind at large? I'll never be constant again; henceforth I fascinate but to deceive!

Enter MINNIE.

Min. Mr. Cheviot Hill, papa tells me that you wish to speak to me.

Ch. (*hurriedly—writing at table*). I do. Miss Symperson, I have no time to beat about the bush; I must come to the point at once. You rejected me a short time since—I will not pretend that I am pleased with you for rejecting me—on the contrary, I think it was in the worst taste. However, let bygones be bygones. Unforeseen circumstances render it necessary that I should marry at once, and you'll do. An early answer will be esteemed, as this is business. (*Resumes his writing.*)

Min. Mr. Hill, dear papa assures me that the report about the loss of your money is incorrect. I hope this may be the case, but I cannot forget that the information comes from dear papa. Now dear papa is the best and dearest papa in the whole world, but he has a lively imagination, and when he wants to accomplish his purpose, he does not hesitate to invent—I am not quite sure of the word, but I think it is "bouncers."

Ch. (*writing*). You are quite right, the word is bouncers. Bouncers or bangers—either will do.

Min. Then forgive my little silly fancies, Mr. Hill; but, before I listen to your suggestion, I must have the very clearest proof that your position is, in every way, fully assured.

Ch. Mercenary little donkey! I will not condescend to proof. I renounce her altogether. (*Rings bell.*)

Enter MAGGIE *with* ANGUS *and* MRS. MACFARLANE. ANGUS *has his arm round her waist.*

Ch. (*suddenly seeing her*). Maggie, come here. Angus, do take your arm from round that girl's waist. Stand back, and don't you listen. Maggie, three months ago I told you that I loved you passionately; to-day I tell you that I love you as passionately as ever; I may add that I am still a rich man. Can you oblige me with a postage-stamp? (MAGGIE *gives him a stamp from her pocket—he sticks it on to his letter.*) What do you say? I must trouble you for an immediate answer, as this is not pleasure—it's business.

Mag. Oh, sir, ye're ower late. Oh, Maister Cheviot, if I'd only ken'd it before! Oh, sir, I love ye right weel; the bluid o' my hairt is nae sae dear to me as thou. (*Sobbing on his shoulder.*) Oh, Cheviot, my ain auld love! my ain auld love!

Ang. (*aside*). Puir lassie, it just dra's the water from my ee to hear her. Oh, mither, mither! my hairt is just breaking. (*Sobs on* MRS. MACFARLANE'S *shoulder.*)

Ch. But why is it too late? You say that you love me. I offer to marry you. My station in life is at least equal to your own. What is to prevent our union?

Mag. (*wiping her eyes*). Oh, sir, ye're unco guid to puir little Maggie, but ye're too late; for she's placed the matter in her solicitor's hands, and he tells her that an action for breach will just bring damages to the tune of a thousand pound. There's a laddie waiting outside noo, to serve the bonnie writ on ye! (*Turns affectionately to* ANGUS.)

Ch. (*falling sobbing on to sofa*). No one will marry me. There is a curse upon me—a curse upon me. No one will marry me—no, not one!

Mrs. Mac. Dinna say that, sir. There's mony a woman—nae young, soft, foolish lassie, neither; but grown women o' sober age, who'd be mair a mither than a wife to ye; and that's what ye want, puir laddie, for ye're no equal to takin' care o' yersel'.

Ch. Mrs. Macfarlane, you are right. I am a man of quick impulse. I see, I feel, I speak. I—you are the tree upon which—that is to say—no, no, d——n it, I can't; I can't! One must draw the line somewhere. (*Turning from her with disgust.*)

Enter MISS TREHERNE *and* BELVAWNEY. *They are followed by* SYMPERSON *and* MINNIE.

Ch. Belinda! Can I believe my eyes? You have returned to me, you have not gone off with Belvawney after all? Thank heaven, thank heaven!

Miss T. I thought that, as I came in, I heard you say something about a tree.

Ch. You are right. As you entered I was remarking that I am a man of quick impulse. I see, I feel, I speak. I have two thousand a year, and I love you passionately. I lay my hand, my heart, and my income, all together, in one lot, at your feet!

Miss T. Cheviot, I love you with an irresistible fervour, that seems to parch my very existence. I love you as I never loved man before, and as I can never hope to love man again. But, in the belief that you were ruined, I went with my own adored Belvawney before the registrar, and that registrar has just made us one! (*Turns affectionately to* BELVAWNEY.)

Bel. (*embraces* BELINDA). Bless him for it—bless him for it!

Ch. (*deadly calm*). One word. I have not yet seen the letter that blights my earthly hopes. For form's sake, I trust I may be permitted to cast my eye over that document? As a matter of business—that's all.

Bel. Certainly. Here it is. You will find the situation of the cottage described in unmistakable terms. (*Hands the letter to* CHEVIOT.)

Ch. (*reads*). "In reply to your letter I have to inform you that Evan Cottage is certainly in England. The deeds relating to the property place this beyond all question" Thank you; I am satisfied. (*Takes out pistol.*)

Bel. Now, sir, perhaps you will kindly release that young lady. She is my wife! (CHEVIOT'S *arm has crept mechanically round* MISS TREHERNE'S *waist.*)

Miss T. Oh, Cheviot! kindly release me—I am his wife!

Ch. Crushed! Crushed! Crushed!

Sym. (*looking over his shoulder at letter, reads*). "Turn over."

Ch. (*despairingly*). Why should I? What good would it do? Oh! I see. I beg your pardon! (*Turns over the page.*) Halloa! (*Rises.*)

All. What?

Ch. (*reads*). "P.S.—I may add that the border line runs through the property. The cottage is undoubtedly in England, though the garden is in Scotland."

Miss T. And we were married in the garden!

Ch. Belinda, we were married in the garden!

[BELINDA *leaves* BELVAWNEY, *and turns affectionately to* CHEVIOT, *who embraces her.*]

Bel. Belinda, stop a bit! don't leave me like this!

Miss T. (*crosses to* BELVAWNEY). Belvawney, I love you with an intensity of devotion that I firmly believe will last while I live. But dear Cheviot is my husband now; he has a claim upon me which it would be impossible—nay, criminal—to resist. Farewell, Belvawney; Minnie may yet be yours! (BELVAWNEY *turns sobbing to* MINNIE, *who comforts him;* MISS T. *crosses back to* CHEVIOT.) Cheviot—my husband—my own old love—if the devotion of a lifetime can atone for the misery of the last few days, it is yours, with every wifely sentiment of pride, gratitude, admiration, and love.

Ch. (*embracing her*). My own! my own! Tender blossom of my budding hopes! Star of my life! Essence of happiness! Tree upon which the fruit of my heart is growing! My Past, my Present, my To Come!

[PICTURE.—CHEVIOT *embracing* MISS TREHERNE. BELVAWNEY *is being comforted by* MINNIE. ANGUS *is solacing* MAGGIE, *and* MRS. MACFARLANE *is reposing on* MR. SYMPERSON'S *bosom.*

SWEETHEARTS.

AN ORIGINAL DRAMATIC CONTRAST,

IN TWO ACTS.

First produced at the Prince of Wales Theatre, under the management of MISS MARIE WILTON, *Saturday, November 7th*, 1874.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Harry Spreadbrow	Age 21 in Act I. Age 51 in Act II.	Mr. Coghlan.
Wilcox, *a Gardener*	... ...	Mr. Glover.
Miss Jenny Northcott	Age 18 in Act I. Age 48 in Act II.	Miss M. Wilton. (Mrs. Bancroft.)
Ruth, *a Maidservant*	... ...	Miss Plowden.

SWEETHEARTS.

ACT I.

DATE—1844.

SCENE.—*The Garden of a pretty Country Villa. The house is new, and the garden shows signs of having been recently laid out; the shrubs are small, and the few trees about are moderate in size; small creepers are trained against the house; an open country in the distance; a little bridge over a stream forms the entrance to the garden.*

WILCOX *is discovered seated on edge of garden wheelbarrow, preparing his "bass" for tying up plants; he rises and comes down with sycamore sapling in his hand; it is carefully done up in matting, and has a direction label attached to it.*

Wil. (*reading the label*). "For Miss Northcott, with Mr. Spreadbrow's kindest regards." "*Acer Pseudo Platanus.*" Ay, Ay! sycamore, I suppose, though it ain't genteel to say so. Humph! sycamores are common enough in these parts; there ain't no call, as I can see, to send a hundred and twenty mile for one. Ah, Mr. Spreadbrow, no go—no go; it ain't to be done with "*Acer Pseudo Platanuses.*" Miss Jenny's sent better men nor you about their business afore this, and as you're agoin' about your'n of your own free will to-night, and a good long way too, why I says, no go, no go! If I know Miss Jenny, she's a good long job, and you've set down looking at your work too long; and now that it's come to going, you'll need to hurry it; and Miss Jenny ain't a job to be hurried over, bless her. Take another three months, and I don't say there mightn't be a chance for you; but it'll take all that—ah, thank goodness, it'll take all that!

Enter JENNY *from behind the house, prepared for gardening.*

Jen. Well, Wilcox, what have you got there? (*He touches his forehead and gives her the sycamore.*) Not my sycamore?

Wil. Yes, miss; Mr. Spreadbrow left it last night as the mail passed.

Jen. Then he's returned already? Why, he was not expected for a week, at least.

Wil. He returned quite sudden last night, and left this here plant, with a message that he would call at twelve o'clock to-day, miss.

Jen. I shall be very glad to see him. So this is really a shoot of the dear old tree!

Wil. Come all the way from Lunnon, too. There's lots of 'em hereabouts, miss; I could ha' got you a armful for the asking.

Jen. Yes, I dare say; but this comes from the dear old house at Hampstead.

Wil. Do it, now?

Jen. You remember the old sycamore on the lawn where Mr. Spreadbrow and I used to sit and learn our lessons years ago?—well, this is a piece of it. And as Mr. Spreadbrow was going to London, I asked him to be so kind as to call, and tell the new people, with his compliments, that he wanted to cut a shoot from it for a young lady who had a very pleasant recollection of many very happy hours spent under it. It was an awkward thing for a nervous young gentleman to do, and it's very kind of him to have done it. (*Gives back the plant, which he places against upper porch of house.*) So he's coming this morning?

Wil. Yes, miss, to say good-bye.

Jen. (*busies herself at stand of flowers*). Good-bye! "How d'ye do?" you mean.

Wil. No, miss, good-bye. I hear Mr. Spreadbrow's off to Ingy.

Jen. Yes; I believe he is going soon.

Wil. Soon? Ah, soon enough! He joins his ship at Southampton to-night—so he left word yesterday.

Jen. To-night? No; not for some weeks yet? (*Alarmed.*)

Wil. To-night, miss. I had it from his own lips, and he's coming to-day to say good-bye.

Jen. (*aside*). To-night!

Wil. And a good job too, say I, though he's a nice young gentleman too.

Jen. I don't see that it's a good job.

Wil. I don't want no young gentleman hanging about here, miss. I know what they comes arter;—they comes arter the flowers.

Jen. The flowers? What nonsense!

Wil. No, it ain't nonsense. The world's a haphazard garden where common vegetables like me, and hardy annuals like my boys, and sour crabs like my old 'ooman, and pretty delicate flowers like you and your sisters grow side by side. It's the flowers they come arter.

Jen. Really, Wilcox, if papa don't object I don't see what you have to do with it.

Wil. No, your pa don't object; but I can't make your pa out, miss. Walk off with one of his tuppenny toolips and he's your enemy for life. Walk off with one of his darters and he settles three hundred a year on you. Tell 'ee what, miss; if I'd a family of grown gals like you, I'd stick a conservatory label on each of them—"Please not to touch the specimens!"—and I'd take jolly good care they didn't.

Jen. At all events, if Mr. Spreadbrow is going away to-night, you need not be alarmed on my account. I am a flower that is not picked in a minute.

Wil. Well said, miss! And as he *is* going, and as you won't see him no more, I don't mind saying that a better-spoken young gentleman I don't know. A good, honest, straightforard young chap he is—looks you full in the face with eyes that seem to say, "I'm a open book—turn me over—look me through and through—read every page of me, and if you find a line to be ashamed on, tell me of it, and I'll score it through."

Jen. (*demurely*). I dare say Mr. Spreadbrow is much as other young men are.

Wil. As other young men? No, no—Lord forbid, miss! Come—say a good word for him, miss, poor young gentleman. He's said many a good word of you, I'll go bail.

Jen. Of me?

Wil. (*takes ladder which is leaning against the house and places it against upper porch of house, and, going a little way up it, speaks this speech from it.* JENNY *remains seated.*) Ay. Why, only Toosday, when I was at work again the high road, he rides up on his little bay 'oss, and he stands talking to me over the hedge and straining his neck to catch a sight of you at a window; that was Toosday. "Well, Wilcox," says he, "it's a fine day!"—it rained hard Toos-

day, but it's always a fine day with him. "How's Miss Northcott?" says he. "Pretty well, sir," says I. "Pretty she always is; and well she ought to be if the best of hearts and the sweetest of natures will do it!" Well, I knew *that*, so off I goes to another subject, and tries to interest him in drainage, and subsoils, and junction pipes; but no, nothin' would do for him, but he must bring the talk back to *you*. So at last I gets sick of it, and I up and says: "Look ye here, Mr. Spreadbrow," says I, "I'm only the gardener. This is Toosday, and Miss Northcott's pa's in the study, and I dessay *he'll* be happy to hear what you've got to say about *her*." Lord, it'd ha' done your heart good to see how he flushed up as he stuck his spurs into the bay and rode off fifteen miles to the hour. (*Laughing.*) That was Toosday.

Jen. (*very angrily*). He had no right to talk about me to a servant.

Wil. (*coming down from ladder*). But, bless you, don't be hard on him, he couldn't help it, miss. But don't you be alarmed, he's going away to-night, for many and many a long year, and you won't never be troubled with *him* again. He's going with a heavy heart, take my word for it, and I see his eyes all wet, when he spoke about saying good-bye to you; he'd the sorrow in his throat, but he's a brave lad, and he gulped it down, though it was as big as an apple. (*Ring.*) There he is. Soothe him kindly, miss—don't you be afraid, you're safe enough—he's a good lad, and he can't do no harm now. [*Exit* WILCOX.

Jen. What does he want to go to-day for? he wasn't going for three months. He could remain if he liked; India has gone on very well without him for five thousand years: it could have waited three months longer; but men are always in such a hurry. He might have told me before—he *would* have done so if he really, really liked me! I wouldn't have left *him*—yes I would—but then that's different. Well, if some people can go, some people can remain behind, and some other people will be only too glad to find *some people* out of their way!

Enter SPREADBROW, *followed by* WILCOX.

Jen. (*suddenly changes her manner, rises and crosses*). Oh, Mr. Spreadbrow, how-d'ye-do? Quite well? I'm so glad! Sisters quite well? That's right—how kind of you to think of my tree! So you are really and truly going to India to-night? That *is* sudden!

Spread. Yes, very sudden—terribly sudden. I only heard of my appointment two days ago, in London, and I'm to join my ship to-night. It's very sudden indeed—and—and I've come to say good-bye.

Jen. Good-bye. (*Offering her hand.*)

Spread. Oh, but not like that, Jenny! Are you in a hurry?

Jen. Oh dear no, I thought you were; won't you sit down? (*They sit.*) And so your sisters are quite well?

Spread. Not very; they are rather depressed at my going so soon. It may seem strange to you, but they will miss me.

Jen. I'm sure they will. I should be terribly distressed at your going—if I were your sister. And you're going for so long!

Spread. I'm not likely to return for a great many years.

Jen. (*with a little suppressed emotion*). I'm so sorry we shall not see you again. Papa will be very sorry.

Spread. More sorry than you will be?

Jen. Well, no, I shall be very sorry, too—very, *very* sorry—there!

Spread. How very kind of you to say so.

Jen. We have known each other so long—so many years, and we've always been good friends, and it's always sad to say good-bye for the last time (*he is delighted*) to anybody! (*he relapses*). It's so very sad when one knows for certain that it *must* be the last time.

Spread. I can't tell you how happy I am to hear you say it's so sad. But (*hopefully*) my prospects are not altogether hopeless, there's one chance for me yet. I'm happy to say I'm extremely delicate, and there's no knowing, the climate may not agree with me, and I may be invalided home! (*very cheerfully*).

Jen. Oh! but that would be very dreadful.

Spread. Oh, yes, of course it would be dreadful in one sense; but it—it would have its advantages. (*Looking uneasily at* WILCOX, *who is hard at work.*) Wilcox is hard at work, I see.

Jen. Oh, yes, Wilcox is hard at work. He is very industrious.

Spread. Confoundedly industrious! He is working in the sun without his hat. (*Significantly.*)

Jen. Poor fellow.

Spread. Isn't it injudicious, at his age?

Jen. Oh, I don't think it will hurt him.

Spread. I really think it will. (*He motions to her to send him away.*)

Jen. Do you? Wilcox, Mr. Spreadbrow is terribly distressed because you are working in the sun.

Wil. That's mortal good of him. (*Aside, winking.*) They want me to go. All right; he can't do much harm now. (*Aloud.*) Well, sir, the sun is hot, and I'll go and look after the cucumbers away yonder, right at the other end of the garden. (WILCOX *going*—SPREADBROW *is delighted.*)

Jen. No, no, no!—don't go away! Stop here, only put on your hat. That's what Mr. Spreadbrow meant. (WILCOX *puts on his hat.*) There, *now* are you happy?

Spread. I suppose it will soon be his dinner-time?

Jen. Oh, he *has* dined. You *have* dined, haven't you, Wilcox?

Wil. Oh, yes, miss, *I've* dined, thank ye kindly.

Jen. Yes; he has dined! Oh! I quite forgot!

Spread. What?

Jen. I must interrupt you for a moment, Wilcox; I quite forgot that I promised to send some flowers to Captain Dampier this afternoon. Will you cut them for me?

Wil. Yes, miss. (*knowingly*). Out of the conservatory, I suppose, miss? (WILCOX *going*, SPREADBROW *again delighted.*)

Jen. No, these will do. (*Pointing to open-air flower beds*—SPREADBROW *again disappointed.*) Stop, on second thoughts perhaps you *had* better take them out of the conservatory, and cut them carefully—there's no hurry.

Wil. (*aside.*) *I* understand! Well, poor young chap, let him be, let him be; he's going to be turned off to-night, and his last meal may as well be a hearty one. [*Exit* WILCOX.

Spread. (*rises in great delight*). How good of you—how very kind of you!

Jen. To send Captain Dampier some flowers?

Spread. (*much disappointed*). Do you really want to send that fellow some flowers?

Jen. To be sure I do. Why should I have asked Wilcox to cut them?

Spread. I thought—I was a great fool to think so—but I thought it might have been because we could talk more pleasantly alone.

Jen. I really wanted some flowers; but, as you say, we certainly can talk more pleasantly alone. (*She busies herself with preparing the sycamore.*)

Spread. I've often thought that nothing is such a check on

—pleasant conversation—as the presence of—of—a gardener—who is not interested in the subject of conversation.

Jen. (*gets the tree, and cuts off the matting with which it is bound with garden scissors which she has brought with her from the table*). Oh, but Wilcox is very interested in everything that concerns you. Do let me call him back.

Spread. No, no; not on my account!

Jen. He and I were having quite a discussion about you when you arrived. (*Digging a hole for tree.*)

Spread. About me?

Jen. Yes; indeed we almost quarrelled about you.

Spread. What, was he abusing me then?

Jen. Oh, no; he was speaking of you in the highest terms.

Spread. (*much taken aback*). Then—*you* were abusing me!

Jen. N—no, not exactly *that;* I—I didn't agree with all he said—(*he is much depressed, she notices this*) at least, not openly.

Spread. (*hopefully*). Then you did secretly?

Jen. I shan't tell you.

Spread. Why?

Jen. Because it will make you dreadfully vain. There!

Spread. (*delighted*). Very—very dreadfully vain? (*he takes her hand*).

Jen. Very dreadfully vain indeed. Don't! (*Withdraws her hand. During this she is digging the hole, kneeling on the edge of the flower bed; he advances to her and kneels on edge of bed near her.*)

Spread. Do you know it's most delightful to hear you say that? It's without exception the most astonishingly pleasant thing I've ever heard in the whole course of my life! (*Sees the sycamore.*) Is that the tree I brought you? (*Rises from his knees.*)

Jen. Yes. I'm going to plant it just in front of the drawing-room window, so that I can see it whenever I look out. Will you help me? (*He prepares to do so; she puts it into the hole.*) Is that quite straight? Hold it up, please, while I fill in the earth. (*He holds it while she fills in the earth; gradually his hand slips down till it touches hers.*) It's no use, Mr. Spreadbrow, our both holding it in the same place! (*He runs his hand up the stem quickly.*)

Spread. I beg your pardon—very foolish of me.

Jen. Very.

Spread. I'm very glad there will be something here to make you think of me when I'm many many thousand miles away, Jenny. For I shall be always thinking of *you.*

Jen. Really, now that's very nice! It will be so delightful, and so odd to know that there's somebody thinking about me right on the other side of the world!

Spread. (*sighing*). Yes. It *will* be on the other side of the world!

Jen. But that's the delightful part of it—right on the other side of the world! It will be such fun!

Spread. Fun!

Jen. Of course, the farther you are away the funnier it will seem. (*He is approaching her again.*) Now keep on the other side of the world. It's just the distance that gives the point to it. There are dozens and dozens of people thinking of me close at hand. (*She rises.*)

Spread. (*taking her hand*). But not as I think of you, Jenny—dear, dear Jenny—not as I've thought of you for years and years, though I never dared tell you so till now. I can't bear to think that anybody else is thinking of you kindly, earnestly, seriously, as I think of you.

Jen. (*earnestly*). You may be quite sure, Harry, quite, quite sure that you will be the only one who is thinking of me kindly, seriously, and earnestly (*he is delighted*) in India. (*He relapses—she withdraws her hand.*)

Spread. And when this tree, that we have planted together, is a big tree, you must promise me that you will sit under it every day, and give a thought now and then to the old playfellow who gave it to you.

Jen. A big tree! Oh, but this little plant will never live to be a big tree, surely?

Spread. Yes, if you leave it alone, it grows very rapidly.

Jen. Oh, but I'm not going to have a big tree right in front of the drawing-room window! It will spoil the view, it will be an eyesore. We had better plant it somewhere else.

Spread. (*bitterly*). No, let it be, you can cut it down when it becomes an eyesore. It grows very rapidly, but it will, no doubt, have lost all interest in your eyes long before it becomes an eyesore.

Jen. But Captain Dampier says that a big tree in front of a window checks the current of fresh air.

Spread. Oh, if Captain Dampier says so, remove it.

Jen. Now don't be ridiculous about Captain Dampier; I've a very great respect for his opinion on such matters.

Spread. I'm sure you have. You see a great deal of Captain Dampier, don't you?

Jen. Yes, and we shall see a great deal more of him; he's going to take the Grange next door.

Spread. (*bitterly*). That will be very convenient.

Jen. (*demurely*). Very.

Spread. (*jealously*). You seem to admire Captain Dampier very much.

Jen. I think he is very good-looking. Don't you?

Spread. He's well enough—for a small man.

Jen. Perhaps he'll grow.

Spread. Is Captain Dampier going to live here always?

Jen. Yes, until he marries.

Spread. (*eagerly*). Is—is he likely to marry?

Jen. I don't know. (*Demurely.*) Perhaps he may.

Spread. But whom—whom?

Jen. (*bashfully*). Haven't you heard? I thought you knew!

Spread. (*excitedly*). No, no, I don't know; I've heard nothing. Jenny—dear Jenny—tell me the truth, don't keep anything from me, don't leave me to find it out; it will be terrible to hear of it out there; and, if you have ever liked me—and I'm sure you have—tell me the whole truth at once!

Jen. (*bashfully*). Perhaps, as an old friend, I ought to have told you before; but indeed, indeed I thought you knew. Captain Dampier is engaged to be married to—to—my cousin Emmie.

Spread. (*intensely relieved*). To your cousin Emmie. Oh, thank you, thank you, thank you! Oh, my dear, dear Jenny, do—do let me take your hand. (*Takes her hand and shakes it enthusiastically.*)

Jen. Are you going?

Spread. No. (*Releasing it—much cast down.*) I was going to ask you to do me a great favour, and I thought I could ask it better if I had hold of your hand. I was going to ask you if you would give me a flower—any flower, I don't care what it is.

Jen. (*affecting surprise*). A flower? Why, of course I will. But why?

Spread. (*earnestly*). That I may have a token of you and of our parting wherever I go; that I may possess an emblem of you that I shall never—never part with, that I can carry about with me night and day wherever I go, throughout my whole life.

Jen. (*apparently much affected, crosses slowly, stoops and takes up large geranium in pot*). Will this be too big?

Spread. (*disconcerted*). But I mean a flower—only a flower.

Jen. Oh, but do have a bunch! Wilcox shall pick you a beauty.

Spread. No, no; I want you to pick it for me. I don't care what it is—a daisy will do—if *you* pick it for me!

Jen. What an odd notion! (*Crossing to flower-stand, and picking a piece of mignonette—he puts down flower-pot by bed.*) There! (*picking a flower and giving it to him*) will that do?

Spread. I can't tell you how inestimably I shall prize this flower. I will keep it while I live, and whatever good fortune may be in store for me, nothing can ever be so precious in my eyes.

Jen. I had no idea you were so fond of flowers. Oh, do have some more!

Spread. No, no—but—you must let me give you this in return; I brought it for you, Jenny dear—dear Jenny! Will you take it from me? (*Takes a rose from his button-hole, and offers it.*)

Jen. (*amused and surprised*). Oh yes! (*Takes it and puts it down on the table carelessly—he notices this with much emotion.*)

Spread. Well, I've got to say good-bye; there's no reason why it shouldn't be said at once. (*Holding out his hand.*) Good-bye, Jenny!

Jen. (*cheerfully*). Good-bye! (*He stands for a moment with her hand in his—she crosses to porch.*)

Spread. Haven't—haven't you anything to say to me?

Jen. (*after thinking it over*). No, I don't think there's anything else. No—nothing. (*She leans against the porch—he stands over her.*)

Spread. Jenny, I'm going away to-day, for years and years, or I wouldn't say what I'm going to say—at least not yet. I'm little more than a boy, Jenny; but if I were eighty, I couldn't be more in earnest—indeed I couldn't! Parting for so many years is like death to me; and if I don't say what I'm going to say before I go, I shall never have the pluck to say it after. We were boy and girl together, and—and I loved you then—and every year I've loved you more and more; and now that I'm a man, and you are nearly a woman, I—I—Jenny dear—I've nothing more to say!

Jen. How you astonish me!

Spread. Astonish you? Why, you know that I loved you.

Jen. Yes, yes; as a boy loves a girl—but now that I am a woman it's impossible that you can care for me.

Spread. Impossible—because you are a woman!

Jen. You see it's so unexpected.

Spread. Unexpected?

Jen. Yes. As children it didn't matter, but it seems so shocking for grown people to talk about such things. And then, not gradually, but all at once—in a few minutes. It's awful!

Spread. Oh, Jenny, think. I've no time to delay—my having to go has made me desperate. One kind word from you will make me go away happy: without that word, I shall go in unspeakable sorrow. Jenny, Jenny, say one kind word!

Jen. (*earnestly*). Tell me what to say?

Spread. It must come from you, my darling; say whatever is on your lips—whether for good or ill—I can bear it now.

Jen. Well, then: I wish you a very very pleasant voyage—and I hope you will be happy and prosperous—and you must take great care of yourself—and you can't think how glad I shall be to know that you think of me, now and then, in India. There!

Spread. Is that all?

Jen. Yes, I think that's all. (*Reflectively.*) Yes—that's all.

Spread. Then—(*with great emotion which he struggles to suppress*) there's nothing left but to say good-bye—(*Music in orchestra till end of Act, "Good-bye, Sweetheart"*)—and I hope you will always be happy, and that, when you marry, you will marry a good fellow who will—who will—who will—— Good-bye! [*Exit, rapidly.*

[JENNY *watches him out—sits down, leaving the gate open—hums an air gaily—looks round to see if he is coming back—goes on humming—takes up the flower he has given her—plays with it—gradually falters, and at last bursts into tears, laying her head on the table over the flower he has given her, and sobbing violently.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*The same as in Act I., with such additions and changes as may be supposed to have taken place in thirty years. The house, which was bare in Act I., is now entirely covered with Virginia and other creepers; the garden is much more fully planted than in Act I., and trees that were small in Act I. are tall and bushy now; the general arrangement of the garden is the same, except that the sycamore planted in Act I. has developed into a large tree, the boughs of which roof in the stage; the landscape has also undergone a metamorphosis, inasmuch as that which was open country in Act I. is now covered with picturesque semi-detached villas, and there are indications of a large town in the distance. The month is September, and the leaves of the Virginia creepers wear their autumn tint.*

JENNY *discovered seated on a bench at the foot of the tree, and* RUTH *is standing by her side, holding a skein of cotton, which* JENNY *is winding.* JENNY *is now a pleasant-looking middle-aged lady.*

Jen. Have you any fault to find with poor Tom?

Ruth. No, miss, I've no fault to find with Tom. But a girl can't marry every young man she don't find fault with, can she now, miss?

Jen. Certainly not, Ruth. But Tom seems to think you have given him some cause to believe that you are fond of him.

Ruth (*bridling up*). It's like his impudence, miss, to say so! Fond of *him* indeed!

Jen. He hasn't said so, Ruth, but I'm quite sure he thinks so. I have noticed of late that you have taken a foolish pleasure in playing fast and loose with poor Tom, and this has made him very unhappy—very unhappy indeed; so much so that I think it is very likely that he will make up his mind to leave my service altogether.

Ruth (*piqued*). Oh, miss, if Tom can make up his mind to go, I'm sure *I* wouldn't stand in his way for worlds.

Jen. But I think you would be sorry if he did.

Ruth. Oh yes, miss, I should be sorry to part with Tom!

Jen. Then I think it's only right to tell you that the foolish fellow talks about enlisting for a soldier, and if he does it at all, he will do it to-night.

Ruth (*with some emotion*). Oh, miss, for that, I do like Tom very much indeed; but if he wants to 'list, of course he's his own master, and if he's really fond of me, what does he want to go and 'list for? (*Going to cry.*) One would think he would like to be where he could talk to me, and look at me—odd times! I'm sure I don't want Tom to go and 'list!

Jen. Then take the advice of an old lady, who knows something of these matters, and tell him so before it's too late—you foolish, foolish girl! Ah, Ruth, I've no right to be hard on you! I've been a young and foolish girl like yourself in my time, and I've done many thoughtless things that I've learnt to be very sorry for. I'm not reproaching you—but I'm speaking to you out of the fulness of my experience, and take my word for it, if you treat poor Tom lightly, you may live to be very sorry for it too! (*Taking her hand.*) There, I'm not angry with you, my dear, but if I'd taken the advice I'm giving you, I shouldn't be a lonely old lady at a time of life when a good husband has his greatest value. (*Ring.*) Go and see who's at the gate!

[*Exit* JENNY. RUTH *goes to the gate, wiping her eyes on her apron—she opens it.*

Enter SPREADBROW (*now* SIR HENRY).

Spread. My dear, is this Mr. Braybrook's?

Ruth. Yes, sir.

Spread. Is he at home?

Ruth. No, sir, he is not; but mistress is.

Spread. Will you give your mistress my card? (*Feeling for his card-case.*) Dear me, I've left my cards at home! Never mind—will you tell your mistress that a gentleman will be greatly indebted to her, if she will kindly spare him a few minutes of her time? Do you think you can charge yourself with that message?

Ruth. Mistress is in the garden, sir; I'll run and tell her, if you'll take a seat. [*Exit* RUTH.

Spread. That's a good girl! (*He sits on seat.*) I couldn't make up my mind to pass the old house without framing an excuse to take a peep at it. (*Looks round.*) Very nice—very pretty—but, dear me, on a very much smaller scale than I

fancied. Remarkable changes in thirty years! (*Rises and walks round trees, looking about.*) Why, the place is a town, and a railway runs right through it. And this is really the old garden in which I spent so many pleasant hours? Poor little Jenny!—I wonder what's become of her? Pretty little girl, but with a tendency to stoutness; if she's alive, I'll be bound she's fat. So this is Mr. Braybrook's, is it? I wonder who Braybrook is—I don't remember any family of that name hereabouts. (*Looking off.*) This, I suppose, is Mrs. Braybrook. Now, how in the world am I to account for my visit?

Enter JENNY—*she curtsies formally, he bows.*

I beg your pardon, I hardly know how to explain this intrusion. Perhaps I had better state my facts, they will plead my apology:—I am an old Indian civilian, who, having returned to England after many years' absence, is whiling away a day in his native place, and amusing himself with polishing old memories—bright enough once, but sadly tarnished—sadly tarnished!

Jen. Indeed? May I hope that you have succeeded?

Spread. Indifferently well—indifferently well. The fact is, I hardly know where I am, for all my old landmarks are swept away; I assure you I am within the mark, when I say that this house is positively the only place I can identify.

Jen. The town has increased very rapidly of late.

Spread. Rapidly! When I left, there were not twenty houses in the place, but (*politely*) that was long before your time. I left a village, I find a town—I left a beadle, I find a mayor and corporation—I left a pump, I find a statue to a borough member. The inn is a "Palace Hotel Company—" the almshouse a county jail—the pound is a police station, and the common a colony of semi-detached bungalows! Everything changed, including myself—everything new, except myself—ha, ha!

Jen. I shall be glad to offer you any assistance in my power, I should be a good guide, for I have lived here thirty-two years!

Spread. Thirty-two years! is it possible? Then surely I ought to know you? (*He feels for his glasses.*) My name is Spreadbrow—Sir Henry Spreadbrow!

Jen. Spreadbrow! (*Putting on spectacles.*) Is it possible? Why, my very dear old friend (*offering both her hands*), don't you recollect me?

Spread. (*he puts on his double eye-glass, takes both her hands*). God bless me!—is it possible?—and this is really you!—you don't say so! Dear me, dear me! Well, well, well! I assure you I am delighted, most unaffectedly delighted, to renew our friendship! (*Shaking hands again, they sit under tree and look at each other curiously.*)

Spread. Not changed a bit! My dear Jane, you really must allow me. (*They shake hands again.*) And now tell me, how is Mr. Braybrook?

Jen. (*rather surprised*). Oh, Mr. Braybrook is very well; I expect him home presently; he will be very glad to see you, for he has often heard me speak of you.

Spread. Has he indeed? It will give me the greatest—the very greatest possible pleasure, believe me (*very emphatically*), to make his acquaintance.

Jen. (*still surprised at his emphatic manner*). I'm sure he will be delighted.

Spread. Now tell me all about yourself. Any family?

Jen. (*puzzled*). I beg your pardon?

Spread. Any family?

Jen. Mr. Braybrook?

Spread. Well—yes.

Jen. Mr. Braybrook is a bachelor.

Spread. A bachelor? Then let me understand—am I not speaking to Mrs. Braybrook?

Jen. No, indeed you are not! Ha, ha! (*much amused*). Mr. Braybrook is my nephew; the place belongs to him now.

Spread. Oh! then, my dear Jane, may I ask who you are?

Jen. I am not married.

Spread. Not married!

Jen. No; I keep house for my nephew.

Spread. Why, you don't mean to sit there and look me in the face and tell me, after thirty years, that you are still Jane Northbrook?

Jen. (*rather hurt at the mistake*). Northcott.

Spread. Northcott, of course. I beg your pardon—I should have said Northcott. And you are not Mrs. Braybrook? You are not even married! Why, what were they about—what were they about? Not married! Well, now, do you know, I am very sorry to hear that. I am really more sorry and disappointed than I can tell you. (*She looks surprised and rather hurt.*) You'd have made an admirable wife, Jane, and an admirable mother. I can't tell you how sorry I am to find that you are still Jane Northbrook—I should say, Northcott.

Jen. The same in name—much changed in everything else. (*Sighing.*)

Spread. Changed? Not a bit—I won't hear of it. I knew you the moment I saw you! We are neither of us changed. Mellowed perhaps—a little mellowed, but what of that? Who shall say that the blossom is pleasanter to look upon than the fruit? Not I for one, Jane—not I for one.

Jen. Time has dealt very kindly with us, but we're old folks now, Henry Spreadbrow. (*Rises.*)

Spread. I won't allow it, Jane—I won't hear it. (*Rises.*) What constitutes youth? A head of hair? Not at all; I was as bald as an egg at five and twenty—babies are always bald. Eyesight? Some people are born blind. Years? Years are an arbitrary impertinence. Am I an old man or you an old woman, because the earth contrives to hurry round the sun in three hundred and sixty-five days? Why, Saturn can't do it in thirty years. If I had been born on Saturn I should be two years old, ma'am—a public nuisance in petticoats. Let us be thankful that I was not born on Saturn. No—no, as long as I can ride to cover twice a week, walk my five and twenty miles without turning a hair, go to bed at twelve, get up at six, turn into a cold tub and like it, I'm a boy, Jane—a boy—a boy!

Jen. And you are still unmarried?

Spread. I? Oh dear, yes—very much so. No time to think of marriage. Plenty of opportunity, mind, but no leisure to avail myself of it. I've had a bustling time of it, I assure you, Jane, working hard at the Bar and on the Bench, with some success—with some success; (*sits again*) and now that I've done my work, I throw myself back in my easy-chair, fold my hands, cross my legs, and prepare to enjoy myself. Life is before me, and I'm going to begin it. Ha, ha! And so we are really Jane Northcott still?

Jen. Still Jane Northcott.

Spread. I'm indignant to hear it—I assure you that I am positively indignant to hear it. You would have made some fellow so infernally happy; (*rises*) I'm sorry for that fellow's sake—I don't know him, but still I am sorry. Ah, I wish I had remained in England. I do wish, for the very first time since I left it, that I had remained in England.

Jen. Indeed! And why?

Spread. Why? Because I should have done my best to remove that reproach from society. I should indeed, Jane! Ha, ha! After all, it don't much matter, for you wouldn't have had me. Oh yes! you had no idea of it; but, do you know,

I've a great mind to tell you—I *will* tell you. Do you know, I was in love with you at one time. Boy and girl, you know—boy and girl. Ha, ha! *you'd* no idea of it, but I was!

Jen. (*in wonder*). Oh yes; I knew it very well.

Spread. (*much astonished*). You knew it? You knew that I was attached to you!

Jen. Why, of course I did!

Spread. Did you, indeed! Bless me, you don't say so! Now that's amazingly curious. Leave a woman alone to find *that* out! It's instinctive, positively instinctive. Now, my dear Jane, I'm a very close student of human nature, and in pursuit of that study I should like above all things to know by what signs you detected my secret admiration for you. (*Takes her hand.*)

Jen. Why, bless the man! There was no mystery in the matter! You told me all about it!

Spread. I told you all about it?

Jen. Certainly you did—here, in this garden.

Spread. That I admired you—loved you?

Jen. Most assuredly! Surely you've not forgotten it. (*He drops her hand.*) *I* haven't.

Spread. I remember that I had the impertinence to be very fond of you. I forgot that I had the impertinence to tell you so. I remember it now. I made a fool of myself. I remember it by that. I told you that I adored you, didn't I?—that you were as essential to me as the air I breathed—that it was impossible to support existence without you—that your name should be the most hallowed of earthly words, and so forth. Ha, ha! my dear Jane, before I'd been a week on board I was saying the same thing to a middle-aged governess whose name has entirely escaped me. (*She has exhibited signs of pleasure during the earlier part of this speech, and disappointment at the last two lines.*) What fools we make of ourselves!

Jen. And of others!

Spread. Oh, I meant it, Jane; I meant every word I said to you.

Jen. And the governess?

Spread. And the governess! I would have married you, Jane.

Jen. And the governess?

Spread. And the governess! I'd have married *her*, if she had accepted me—but she didn't. Perhaps it was as well—she was a widow with five children—I cursed my destiny at the time, but I've forgiven it since. I talked of blowing out my brains.

I'm glad I didn't do it, as I've found them useful in my profession. Ha! ha! (*Looking round;* JENNY *stands watching him.*) The place has changed a good deal since my time—improved—improved—we've all three improved. I don't quite like this tree, though—it's in the way. What is it? A kind of beech, isn't it?

Jen. No, it's a sycamore.

Spread. Ha! I don't understand English trees—but it's a curious place for a big tree like this, just outside the drawing-room window. Isn't it in the way?

Jen. It *is* rather in the way.

Spread. I don't like a tree before a window, it checks the current of fresh air—don't you find that?

Jen. It *does* check the current of fresh air.

Spread. Then the leaves blow into the house in autumn, and that's a nuisance—and besides, it impedes the view.

Jen. It is certainly open to these objections.

Spread. Then cut it down, my dear Jane. Why don't you cut it down?

Jen. Cut it down! I wouldn't cut it down for worlds. That tree is identified in my mind with many happy recollections.

Spread. Remarkable the influence exercised by associations over a woman's mind. Observe—you take a house, mainly because it commands a beautiful view. You apportion the rooms principally with reference to that view. You lay out your garden at great expense to harmonize with that view, and, having brought that view into the very best of all possible conditions for the full enjoyment of it, you allow a gigantic and wholly irrelevant tree to block it all out for the sake of the sentimental ghost of some dead and gone sentimental reality! Take my advice and have it down. If I had had anything to do with it, you would never have planted it. I shouldn't have allowed it!

Jen. You had so much to do with it that it was planted there at your suggestion.

Spread. At mine? Never saw it before in my life.

Jen. We planted it together thirty years ago—the day you sailed for India.

Spread. It appears to me that that was a very eventful day in my career. We planted it together! I have no recollection of having ever planted a gigantic sycamore anywhere. And we did it together! Why, it would take a dozen men to move it.

Jen. It was a sapling then—you cut it for me.

Spread. (*suddenly and with energy*). From the old sycamore in the old garden at Hampstead! Why, I remember; I went to London expressly to get it for you. (*Laughing—sitting on her left.*) And the next day I called to say good-bye, and I found you planting it, and I helped; and as I was helping I found an opportunity to seize your hand. (*Does so.*) I grasped it—pressed it to my lips—(*does so*), and said, "My dear, dear Jenny" (*he drops her hand suddenly*), and so forth. Never mind *what* I said—but I meant it—I meant it! (*Laughs heartily—she joins him, but her laughter is evidently forced—eventually she shows signs of tears, which he doesn't notice.*) It all comes back with a distinctness which is absolutely photographic. I begged you to give me a flower—you gave me one—a sprig of geranium.

Jen. Mignonette.

Spread. *Was* it mignonette? I think you're right—it was mignonette. I seized it—pressed it to my trembling lips—placed it next my fluttering heart, and swore that come what might I would never, never part with it!—I wonder what I did with that flower!—And then I took one from my button hole—begged you to take it—you took it, and—ha, ha, ha!—you threw it down carelessly on the table, and thought no more about it, you heartless creature—ha, ha, ha! Oh, I was very angry! I remember it perfectly; it was a camellia.

Jen. (*half crying aside*). Not a camellia, I think.

Spread. Yes, a camellia, a large white camellia.

Jen. I don't think it was a camellia; I rather think it was a rosa.

Spread. Nonsense, Jane—come, come, you hardly looked at it, miserable little flirt that you were; and you pretend, after thirty years, to stake your recollection of the circumstance against mine? No, no, Jane, take my word for it, it was a camellia.

Jen. I'm sure it was a rose!

Spread. No, I'm sure it was a camellia.

Jen. (*in tears*). Indeed—indeed, it was a rose. (*Produces a withered rose from a pocket-book—he is very much impressed—looks at it and at her, and seems much affected.*)

Spread. Why, Jane, my dear Jane, you don't mean to say that this is the very flower?

Jen. That is the very flower! (*Rising.*)

Spread. Strange! You seemed to attach no value to it when I gave it to you, you threw it away as something utterly insignificant; and when I leave, you pick it up, and keep it

for thirty years! (*Rising.*) My dear Jane, how like a woman!

Jen. And you seized the flower I gave you—pressed it to your lips, and swore that wherever your good or ill fortune might carry you, you would never part with it; and—and you quite forgot what became of it! My dear Harry, how like a man!

Spread. I was deceived, my dear Jane—deceived! I had no idea that you attached so much value to my flower.

Jen. We were both deceived, Henry Spreadbrow.

Spread. Then is it possible that in treating me as you did, Jane, you were acting a part?

Jen. We were both acting parts—but the play is over, and there's an end of it. (*With assumed cheerfulness.*) Let us talk of something else.

Spread. No, no, Janet, the play is *not* over—we will talk of nothing else—the play is not nearly over. (*Music in orchestra, "John Anderson my Jo."*) My dear Jane—(*rising and taking her hand*), my very dear Jane—believe me, for I speak from my hardened old heart, so far from the play being over, the serious interest is only just beginning. (*He kisses her hand—they walk towards the house.*)

DAN'L DRUCE, BLACKSMITH.

A NEW AND ORIGINAL DRAMA,

IN THREE ACTS.

First performed at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, on Monday, September 11th, 1876.

An incident in the First Act was suggested by George Eliot's Novel "Silas Marner."

CHARACTERS.

Sir Jasper Combe, *a Royalist Colonel* ...	Mr. Howe.
Dan'l Druce	Mr. Hermann Vezin.
Reuben Haines, *a Royalist Sergeant* ...	Mr. Odell.
Geoffrey Wynyard, *a Merchant Sailor*	Mr. Forbes Robertson.
Marple	Mr. Braid.
Joe Ripley, *a Fisherman*	Mr. Weathersby.
Sergeant } *Of the Parliamentary* {	Mr. C. Allbrook.
Soldier } *Army* {	Mr. Fielder.
Dorothy	Miss Marion Terry.

The First Act is supposed to take place shortly after the Battle of Worcester.

An interval of fourteen years between the First and Second Acts.

ACT I.

A RUINED HUT ON THE NORFOLK COAST.

ACT II.

DAN'L DRUCE'S FORGE.

ACT III.

INTERIOR OF DRUCE'S COTTAGE.

DAN'L DRUCE, BLACKSMITH.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Interior of* DAN'L DRUCE'S *hut, a tumble-down old shanty, of the rudest description; with very small wood fire. The whole place is as squalid and miserable as possible. Wind and snow without. Rain and wind heard each time door is opened. Night.*

Rip. (*without*). Hullo! Dan'l, art within? (*Knocks.*) Dan'l, I say, open, will you? (*He kicks the door open.*) Why, the hut's empty. Where's the old devil gone, I wonder? Come in, master, out of the storm.

Enter MARPLE.

Don't be afeard (MARPLE *shuts door*); he'll be a bit rusty, to be sure, at our coming in without leave, but that'll blow off sooner than the gale outside.

Mar. Is the man away?

Rip. Nay, he's never a hundred yards from this; he's hauling up his boat on the beach, maybe, or taking in his nets, and making all snug and taut for the night; and well he may, for the devil's let loose, and there'll be mischief afore morning. The devil likes these here Norfolk coasts, burn him!

Mar. And so Jonas lives here.

Rip. Jonas? No, Dan'l—Dan'l Druce.

Mar. Well, Dan'l Druce, if that's what he calls himself. It's a strange hole for such a man as he!

Rip. It's a fit hole for such a dog as he! A surly, scowling, drunken, miserly, half-starved cur! Never was a sulky hound so far athwart the world's ways as Dan'l Druce. Why, he's as rich as a Jew, and never gave bit nor sup to a soul in the town. Oh, take my word for it, it's a fit hole for such as he. There's only one fitter, and I wish he was in it!

Mar. Stop that cursed red rag of yours, will you?

Rip. Come, come, civil words, master, civil words!

Mar. Set the example. I am this man's brother.

Rip. (*aside*). Well, you've got the family tongue in your head, anyhow. If you're his brother, maybe you know how he came to live here all alone?

Mar. Maybe I do.

Rip. They say that before he came here—a matter o' three or four years since—he was a decent sort o' body enough, a blacksmith, I *do* hear, but he got struck half silly like through some bad luck, and he's been a changed man ever since.

Mar. Oh, they say that, do they?

Rip. Ay. Well, I don't know what he *was*, but I know what he *is;* that's enough for me. The scowlingest, black-browedest, three-corneredest chap *I* ever see, 'cept as regards children, and he's as fond o' children as a young girl, and the littler they are the more he likes 'em, and they likes him. Now, I'm as tender-hearted as a kitten, but I *hates* children, and they can't abide me. That's odd, ain't it?

Mar. Ay.

Rip. Yes, that's Dan'l Druce's story as far as we knows it down in these parts. Maybe you know more?

Mar. Maybe I do.

Rip. Now, I dare swear there was a woman at the bottom of it all. I never got *my* chain cable kinked but a woman had a hand in it.

Mar. (*coming forward*). Hark ye, my lad, you're hard on women. From the look of you, I've a notion no woman ever had much to do with any trouble of yours, saving your mother when she bore you. No, no, your tongue's done all the mischief that ever come to *you.* You let women alone; I'm sure they never interfere with *you.*

Enter DAN'L DRUCE. *He has a bundle of nets over his shoulder, and he is half tipsy. His appearance is that of a man of fifty, but haggard with want. His hair is long and matted, and he has a beard of some days' growth on his chin.*

Dan. Hullo! Who's that? Joe Ripley, eh? Why, Joe Ripley, what dost thou do skulking in other men's huts when they're away? Nothing to lay hands on *here,* Joe Ripley. And thou'st brought a friend, eh? Didst thee think there was too much plunder for a man to carry that thou'st brought an ass to help thee? There's nowt for thee here. Take thine ugly face into the storm; maybe thou'lt get it battered straight. Come, out wi' 'ee!

Rip. Hold thy peace, man. I want nowt of thine. I've brought thee money for thy two nets.

Dan. Where is it?

Rip. And here's a man as says he's thy brother—and I wish him joy o' his brotherhood! I found him in the village asking for thee, so I brought him to thee. (MARPLE *holds out his hand.*)

Dan. (*not heeding him*). Gi' me the money.

Mar. Dost thou not know me, Jonas Marple?

Dan. Dead. Dead three years ago.

Mar. Ay, thou gavest thyself out as dead, that *he* might make an honest woman of her.

Dan. Thou liest, she *was* an honest woman, for all she left me. 'Twas him that stole her, God bless her! Jonas Marple died the day she left him. I'm Dan'l Druce.

Rip. I knew there was a woman in it.

Mar. And if Jonas *be* dead, hast thou no word of welcome to Jonas's brother?

Dan. None! (*To* RIPLEY.) Gi' me the money.

Rip. There! Ay, count it; we're all thieves and liars. (*To* MARPLE.) That's his craze. Is it right?

Dan. I dunno, I can't count to-night. Let it be, I'll count it to-morrow. (*To* MARPLE.) How didst thou find me?

Mar. I found thee through this fellow. I was in the town on law business, and I heard men talk of such a one as thou, and I asked and asked, and found out that thou wast the brother who used to work wi' me. I've come to ask thee to come back to us, and be the man thou wast wont to be. Come, man, be thine old self, thou canst not be better; throw off thy present self, thou canst not be worse!

Dan. Not worse? Why, man, I'm a king, alone here! Here I live, free from liars and thieves, alone! alone! What, back to the world, the hollow, lying world? Not I! Back to the rock on which my ship was wrecked? Not I! Back to the den of thieves that stripped me? Not I! No, no; I don't find fish come back to my nets when once they've slipped through the meshes, and I'm no more a fool than my fish. See here—I've lived here nigh upon four years, and 'cepting some such gaping fool as him (*indicating* RIPLEY), I've seen no soul, and no soul's seen me. I've done harm to none, and none's done harm to me. I've told no lies, and no lies ain't been told me. I've robbed no one, and no one's robbed me. Can any one who walks the world say as much? I've lived on the fish I've caught, the garden I've dug, and I've saved

money by the nets I've made, not much—a trifle to such as thou, and I've sent it far from here—I never keep it here, no, no. I've no hopes, no cares, no fears. And thou askest me to go back to the foul old world, the world that poor dead and gone Jonas Marple was robbed in; the bitter black world that blighted his poor harmless life. No! I'm going to bide here.

Mar. Well, as thou wilt, Jonas.

Dan. Dan'l—that's my name, Dan'l Druce. Jonas Marple died the day his wife left him. His wife's a widow, and, may-hap, married again. God bless her!

Rip. Thou'lt do no good wi' him, there's a devil's flare in his eyes; best let him bide.

Dan. Ay, best let him bide. I'm a poor thing of skin and bone; and this here arm, which made light of a forty-pound hammer four years since, is but a soft-roed thing now; but when muscle went out, devil come in; steer clear o' me, and let me bide.

Mar. Thou'rt sadly changed: it's fearsome to see a good honest, hearty soul changed into the white-faced ghost of what he was. Time was when every beggar had the pulling of thy poor purse-strings, and none were turned empty away from the door. To think that Jonas Marple should have earned the name of miser!

Dan. Does it seem so strange to thee? Hast thou e'er known what it is to set thy heart night and day on one object, to dream of it, sleepin' and wakin', to find the hope of it flavouring thy meat and drink, and weavin' itself so into thy life that every thought o' thy brain is born of it, and every deed o' thy hand has some bearin' on it? And havin' done all this, and so fashioned, and twisted, and turned, and trimmed the chances at thy hand that the one hope of thy soul shall be helped on by it, hast thou known what it is to find, at one bitter, black blow, thy hope made hopeless, thy love loveless, thy life lifeless? So did I hope and pray to be blessed with a little child—so was my hope withered when I thought it sure of fulfilment. I had a store of love in my battered heart to *set on some one thing of my creating*; it was there for that end, and for none other. When *she* left me (curse him!) I knew, for certain, that one thing would never be of flesh and blood, and it never will, for the love of my heart is given over to the next best thing—gold and silver, gold and silver. Ay, brother, I love my gold as other men love their bairns; it's of my making, and I love it, I love it! A mean and sordid love, may-

be, but hard, and bad, and base as thou thinkest me, I've prayed a thousand times that my gold might take a living form, that the one harmless old hope of my wrecked life might come true.

Mar. The age of miracles is past, Jonas. Well, I've said my say and done my do. Stay where thou art, and Heaven forgive thee, Jonas Marple.

Dan. (*sternly*). He's dead!

Mar. (*warmly*). He is; dead to the call of reason, dead to the voice of human love, dead to everything that marks a reasoning man off from the beasts that perish. Thou hast well said, Jonas Marple *is* dead—rest his soul!

Dan. Amen! Now go.

[MARPLE, *after a pause, shrugs his shoulders, and exit with* RIPLEY.

Dan. Ay, he's dead, dead, dead! He died then, that the blackest devil that ever cursed this earth might put her right with the world. Heaven send he has done so! And the bairn! It was promised to me,—promised, but the promise was a lie, a damned black lie—not hers, no, no! not hers, but the double-dyed devil who stole her from me. (*Opens a hole in the floor in front of stool, and takes out a bag of money.*) This is my bairn now (*handling the money*); see, here's another day to thy life, another inch to thy height; grow as thou growest, child, and thou'lt be a golden beauty ere long. Gold, the best thing in the world; "as good as gold," —why, it's a saying; the best thing on earth to make a bairn of! Here's a child that'll never grow up to bring sorrow on its dad's head, that costs nowt to keep, and never grows so big but you wish it bigger—my bairn! I've worked for thee and starved for thee that I might see thee grow, and thou hast growed, growed right royally! Lie here, my beauty, lie there in peace; I'll never wake thee but to add to thy life, my bairn, my beautiful golden bairn!

[*The door is suddenly burst open, and* SIR JASPER COMBE *enters hurriedly, followed by* REUBEN *as if pursued. They are both very ragged and dirty, dressed in torn and faded Royalist uniforms;* SIR JASPER, *an officer,* REUBEN, *a sergeant.* REUBEN *carries a child of three or four years of age, wrapped in a cloak, so as not to be seen by* DAN'L. *They close the door hurriedly, and listen for their pursuers.* REUBEN *places child on locker.*

Jas. At last! safe at last from the yelping bloodhounds!

By the Lord Harry, but of many bouts with death this is the bout that had like to have gone hardest with us, Reuben!

Dan. Who and what are ye, jail-birds?

Reu. Hark, sir! I think I hear them again! (*Listening eagerly.*)

Dan. (*very loudly*). Who and what are ye? (*Going up to them.*)

Jas. (*listening*). Hold thy fool's tongue, or I'll slit it!

Dan. But——

Reu. (*placing his hand over* DAN'L'S *mouth*). Nay, it is necessary that some one hold thy tongue, and if thou wilt not do it, I must!

Jas. Listen to me, my friend! (REUBEN *removes his hand from* DAN'L'S *mouth. He again attempts to speak,* REUBEN *again gags him.*) Nay, cover him up. He will hear the better for that he cannot give tongue the while. Now, keep thine ears open, for this concerns thee: We are proscribed Royalists, and you, miserable man, have harboured us, Heaven help you and, if we are taken here, I, and he, and thou will surely hang—I and he for our sins against the Parliament, thou—for thy virtue in aiding, abetting, and comforting us. Dost thou clearly understand me?

Reu. (*with his hand still over* DAN'L'S *mouth*). Dost thou clearly understand the Colonel? (DAN'L *cannot answer.* REUBEN *repeats his question loudly and angrily.*) Dost thou clearly understand the Colonel?

Jas. (*to* REUBEN). When thou desirest him to be silent it is well to gag him; when thou wouldst have him speak it is judicious to remove the gag!

Reu. As you will, sir. Now then (*removing his hand*), dost thou clearly understand?

Dan. (*loudly*). I clearly understand that ye are two marauding devils, who——

Reu. (*hastily clapping his hand over* DAN'L'S *mouth*). He does *not* understand.

Jas. (*listening*). They've wheeled about, and their hoofs are dying away in the distance. Reuben, let the old beggar go; he may give tongue now till he split his lungs, if he will. We are safe, at least for the present, Reuben; and see to thy pistol—we may have to stand a siege yet, and this door must be barricaded; but with what?

Dan. (*taking up an iron bar from the fireplace and holding it in a threatening attitude*). Go your ways, both of ye; or as I am a man I'll brain ye with this bar!

Jas. The very thing! (*Wrenches it easily out of his hand and barricades the door with it, while* REUBEN *shows* DAN'L *a pistol.*) There! why, it's made for it! A thousand thanks, old gentleman. (DAN'L *recovers himself, flies at* JASPER, *who pushes him away; he falls on to a stool.*) Now, master, listen to me, and if you have any respect for yourself, keep your ears open, for I'm speaking words of life and death. We are desperate men in a desperate strait, and little disposed to stand on ceremony, as you may perhaps have remarked. We are flying for our lives, and we desire to cross to France, where my lady is, and where we shall be safe. To carry out this design we have worked our way to the coast, sleeping under hedges and ricks for six bleak days, and tramping in the wind's eye for six stormy nights, till the fire of life seems to have died out of our bodies, and our legs to have withered from their trunks. You have a stout boat on the beach; when this accursed gale shall have blown itself out you shall have the distinction of working us across to the opposite coast. In the mean time we appoint you our host, and we shall be prepared to look favourably on whatever meat or drink you can set before us.

Dan. Do I look like a man who keeps open house?

Jas. No, hang me if you do.

Dan. If I had my way, I'd hang you, anyhow.

Jas. Ay, and there's many more of your way of thinking.

Dan. I'll be sworn there are. Well, get out o' my hut (*rises*); this is not *your* way; this is not the road to the gallows.

Reu. My good fellow, that's why we took it!

Dan. Who, in the devil's name, are ye?

Jas. I'm a cavalier colonel, a trifle out of repair, and a thought begrimed, maybe, but that'll wash off. Royalist to the backbone, as I proved some time since at Worcester, where my backbone had to bear the brunt of the flight! This is my regiment, the King's Dragoons (*indicating* REUBEN). Come, doff thy hat, King's Dragoons, and salute the gentleman; the credit of the corps is in thy keeping, Reuben, for thou'rt all that's left of it! (*To* DAN'L.) A worthy fellow, this regiment of mine, but somewhat shy and constrained in good company, but he will improve when he sees that flask of Schiedam that thou art about to surprise us with. Now, tell me, art thou for the Parliament?

Dan. No.

Jas. Then thou art for the king?

Dan. It's a lie! I'm for myself.

Jas. And for us.

Dan. Nay, I'll be damned if I am!

Jas. Nay, I'll swear thou'rt for us if thou be not traitor to thyself; for if we hang at all we all hang together. *I'll* see to that. Now, what food have you got?

Dan. None (*sulkily*).

Jas. What can you get?

Dan. Nothing.

Jas. Where are we then?

Dan. Nowhere.

Jas. Harkee, sir, I'm just in that mood that I don't care the flash of a flint whose life is swept out of my way when it comes betwixt me and my wants. I want food—get it.

Dan. I've no food—I'm a beggar.

Jas. Here's a coin—our last—go and get bread, meat, and drink. Now be off, or Reuben here shall whip you with his sword-flat till he drops. (REUBEN *draws.*) And, mark me, if by deed, word, or sign you do aught to give a clue to our hiding-place, I'll burn the hut to the ground, and everything in it.

Dan. But—— (REUBEN *pushes him.*)

Jas. Not a word. Be off, and do your errand—and mind, no treachery, or—— (JASPER *takes a burning log from the fire, and holds it immediately over the hole where* DAN'L'S *money is concealed.* DAN'L *snatches it from him.*)

Dan. Put that down, put that down, for the love of Heaven—put it down, I say, you'll have the hut afire—and I'll see what I can do, I'll see what I can do.

[DAN'L *throws log on fire and exit.*

Jas. Whew! I've brought the old devil to his senses. What a life this is! Was ever poor dog so hounded about from pillar to post as Jasper Combe? and for no better reason than that he is a gentleman, and loves his king!

Reu. Pardon, sir, but I never was accounted a gentleman, and for my king I care not one jot, yet am I hounded much as you are.

Jas. Thou art hounded much as I am because thou thyself art as I am, though in a lower degree. King Charles is my king (*raises hat*)—God bless him!—and I serve him, and am hunted for so doing. Jasper Combe is *thy* king (REUBEN *raises hat*)—God bless him likewise!—and thou servest him, and thou art hunted for so doing. The analogy is complete. Be thou as faithful to thy king as I am to mine, and thy king will reward thee—when my king rewards me! Is the child safe?

Reu. (*uncovering the child, and bringing it down*). Ay, sir, thanks to my cloak; though I'm but a sorry dry-nurse, having

taken to it late in life; but it's never too late to learn, and I've learnt this, that babes won't eat ship's biscuits, and strong waters choke them. Their poor little heads can't stand strong waters. I'll marry some day on that piece of knowledge.

Jas. Add this to it, to my dower—that when thou art flying for thy life it's best to leave thy babes behind. A dozen times we might have got away but for being hampered with this squalling abomination. Was ever officer of cavalry accursed with such a ridiculous element of peril?

Reu. Was ever sergeant of horse armed with such a mischief-dealing implement?

Jas. Well, there's no help for it. My lady would have gone mad had I returned to her without it. She is devotedly attached to the child.

Reu. Strange that attachment of some mothers for their children. My mother always disliked me and kept me at a convenient distance; but *she* was a Scotchwoman and not liable to be imposed on.

Jas. Well, we must make the best of a bad job. Whew! How cold it is. I'm chilled to the marrow of my bones. That fellow is taking his leisure over his errand; see, Reuben, if thou canst find aught in the hut.

Reu. Here's a locker, your honour, but close fastened.

Jas. A proof that there's something in it. Start it with thy sword. Stay, I'll do it (*takes up hatchet*); so, gently (*opens locker*). Good, a crust of bread and some dried fish.

Reu. And a bottle of right good Schiedam, that never paid duty, I'll be sworn.

Jas. (*taking it*). And on that account fairly forfeit to the Crown, which, on this occasion, I represent. So, bring an armful of those logs and make a merry blaze, for I ache as though I were trussed in a suit of thumbscrews. (REUBEN *brings wood.*) That's well; ha! ha! Now let us enjoy ourselves. Who would have thought the dingy old pig-stye had so much life in it! It's the first good blaze I've seen since the long-nosed devils fired the old mill we lived in. Come, we'll be jolly. (REUBEN *takes a piece of bread*, JASPER *snatches it from him.*) Nay, of food there's but enough for one (JASPER *eats*; REUBEN *takes up bottle and holds it to the light*, JASPER *snatches it from him*), and of Schiedam there's not nearly enough for one. Why, thou gross and sensuous varlet, canst thou not be jolly without meat and drink? 'Tis always so with the baseborn; of intellectual recreation they have no notion whatever.

Reu. I've eaten nothing for two days, and I'm hungry.

Jas. Thou'lt have to wait till the old scoundrel returns.

Reu. (*at door*). There's no signs of him yet.

Jas. Then give reins to thy voice and hail him. He took the road to the left. (*Exit* REUBEN *shouting—his voice dies away in the distance.*) Here's a plight for the Lord of Combe-Raven! Stripped of an ancestral mansion and two thousand old acres; hunted to his death by broad-brimmed bloodhounds—separated from his pretty wife by some two hundred miles of barren land and stormy water, and saddled with a confounded brat that hampers his flight, let him turn whithersoever he will! And say that I cross this accursed Channel—how am I to get to Paris—penniless as I am? When I think of what I have before me, I'm minded to make short work with this world, and try another! By the Lord Harry!—(*stamps impatiently; his foot starts a board over* DAN'L'S *hoard.*) Ha! Why, what's this? Not gold? (*Takes out some.*) Gold—and in profusion! Here's a way out of our difficulties, if Combe-Raven were but the man to take it. The old miser! (*Handling the money.*) Bah—in another week's time we may, perhaps, come down to this sort of thing—who knows? But not yet—no, not yet. (*Throws it into hole.*) Lie there—I'll not meddle with thee, though (*closing hole*) thou'lt be spent on a worse errand than helping Jasper Combe to his wife and his king, I'll be sworn.

Enter REUBEN *in breathless haste.* JASPER *quickly covers the hole.*

Reu. Yes, sir—we must fly—and that at once.

Jas. What d'ye mean?

Reu. I mean treachery—the old man has played us false!—I hear the horses' hoofs in the distance——

Jas. A thousand devils wring his damnable neck! Run to the boat—get her ready for the sea. I'll join thee at once and we'll launch her together.

Reu. But——

Jas. Well?

Reu. If there's such a thing as a crust of bread, or the tail of a dried mackerel——

Jas. But there's not—be off. (*He watches him out, then quickly turns to the hole in which the money is concealed.*) So—this changes the aspect of affairs. Old fool, thou hast betrayed us, and this is fair plunder. (*Takes it out of the hole.*)

With fair luck we may beat across to France to-night, and once there we are safe. But the child—again a clog on our movements! She would surely perish in an open boat on such a night as this. It's a matter of life and death—*her* life as well as mine. It would be murder to take her to sea with us, and it would be murder to remain and fight these fellows with her in our arms. There is no help for it—I must leave her here—this locket will serve to identify her (*putting a locket and chain on her neck*)—and I'll reclaim her when I get across. They'll never harm a child!

Enter REUBEN *hurriedly.*

Reu. Sir, sir, the troops are upon us—they're not two hundred yards off——

Jas. I'm coming. (*Exit* REUBEN. JASPER *writes on a piece of paper, and pins it on the child's dress.*) So—lie thou there, and God help thee, little one. I'm loth to leave thee, but it's for life and death—for life and death!

[JASPER *leaps through the window as* DAN'L *and a* Sergeant, *with four* Soldiers, *in Parliamentary uniform, enter at the door.*

Dan. (*sees blaze of log fire*). Fire! fire! He has fired the hut —he has fired the hut!

Ser. Nay, fool, 'tis but thy blazing hearth; thy hut's safe enough. Where are thy prisoners?

Dan. Oh, the reckless prodigal! see how he hath wasted my substance!

Ser. There are no men hidden here. The sons of Belial have escaped. Why, thou hast betrayed us; and if so, thou shalt hang for it. (*2nd* Soldier *mounts ladder to get into loft.*)

Dan. They were here, but the noise of thy horses' hoofs has alarmed them, and they are gone. I warned thee to tether thy beasts afar, and proceed silently.

1*st Sol.* See, they are putting off from the beach. (*2nd* Soldier *descends ladder and makes ready to fire.*)

Dan. My boat, oh, my boat!

Ser. Bring down the Philistines, Nahum; a steady shot under the fifth rib, and may the Lord have mercy on them!

1*st Sol.* I will even smite them hip and thigh. (*He fires through the window.*) Missed! (*Others fire outside.*) Nay, they're beyond range. May Heaven mercifully overwhelm them in the great waters!

Dan. (*sees hole in floor*). Gone, gone! Sergeant, see; they are gone—they were hidden in here—and they're gone!

Ser. In there? Nay, there's never room for two stout men in that cranny.

Dan. Men? Curse the men! It's my gold—my gold! they've stolen it; they've robbed me! Sixty golden pounds! all I had—all I had! and it's gone! My child! my child! they've stolen my child! (*Weeps passionately on his knees.*)

Ser. Nay, man, see, thy child's safe enough, and a bonny lass she be. (*Taking up child from behind table.*)

Dan. (*raising his head stupidly*). Eh? Why, what's that?

Ser. Thy child! Come, man, be thyself; the child's safe enough. (*Places child on ground.*)

Sol. He's crazed!

Dan. (*stupefied*). That's not mine. My gold is my child! The gold that the infernal villains have taken!

Ser. Here's a paper, and some words writ on it.

Dan. Read—read—I cannot read.

Ser. (*reads*). "Be kind to the child, and it shall profit thee. Grieve not for thy gold—it hath taken this form." [*Music.*

Dan. (*on his knees taking the child*). A miracle, a miracle! Down on your knees, down, I say, for Heaven has worked a miracle to save me. This money, for which I toiled night and day, and which I loved and worshipped, was to me as a child—a dear dear child. I prayed that this might be, but scoffers mocked me when I prayed, and said that the days of miracles were passed. But they lied, for my prayer has been hearkened to. See, it has *her* eyes, *her* eyes, my darling, my darling! My Heaven-sent bairn, thou hast brought me back to reason, to manhood, to life! (*The* Soldiers *crowd round him.* 1*st* Soldier *offers to touch the child.*) Hands off, hands off! (*All fall back.*) Touch not the Lord's gift! touch not the Lord's gift!

[Tableau. Dan'l—*the child on the ground before him—soldiers grouped around.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*The interior of a picturesque old forge. The forge is open at the back, and* DRUCE'S *cottage is seen through opening. There is a path off.* DAN'L DRUCE, *a hearty-looking old man of sixty-four, is discovered hammering lustily at a piece of red-hot iron on his anvil.*

Dan. (*laying down his hammer*). Whew! That job's done! Eh, but I'm that breathed, surelie. Why, Dan'l Druce, if thou'rt worked out like this at twelve o' noon, it's time ye thought of getting a partner into the old forge. But somehow the forge fire seems to strike hotter than o' yore; and the iron of to-day takes more hammerin' than the iron o' thirty year ago. Mebbe I'm growin' old. Well, a body can't hope to live sixty-four year, and leave off a young un arter all. 'Twouldn't be fair on the boys—no, nor the gals neither—eh, Dorothy?

Enter DOROTHY *running.*

Dor. Oh, father, thou shouldst see the Green, by Raby's End. The village is brave with banners and garlands. I have helped to deck it, father. And Master Maynard, the constable, is mounted on an ale cask to receive Sir Jasper Combe, who should pass on his way to Combe-Raven in half an hour; and the band of music hath arrived from Norwich, and *they're* all on ale casks too; and they are to play stirring music while the constable readeth an address to his worship!

Dan. It is a merciful provision, Dorothy, lest the address be heard. So Sir Jasper will be here in half an hour, eh?

Dor. Yes, and I long to see him. I have heard that he is a grave gentleman of goodly presence, and beyond measure kindly. He is a righteous landlord, too, so folk say, and giveth largely to the poor.

Dan. He is needed in these parts, for the poor were sorely used by the late squire. I shall be right glad to welcome him, but (*wearily*) I'll not go to Raby's End to do it. (*Sits on stool.*)

Dor. Art thou wearied, father?

Dan. Growin' old, lass, growin' old. It's one o' those bless-

ings that allers comes to him that waits long enough. But I don't grumble, Dorothy. If old age will leave me strength enough to pull at a pipe and empty a tankard—two things thou canst not do for me, Dorothy—why, that's all I ask. My lass can do the rest.

Dor. As I have been to thee so will I be to the end.

Dan. There's no saying, Dorothy. Thou'rt comely, lass, and mebbe, ere long, some smart young lad will whip thee from my arms, and carry thee away to t'other side o' the sunrise. There's mor'n one within a mile o' this who'd give his right arm to do it now.

Dor. Nay, thou art unkind. Did I not tend thee when thou wast hale and strong, and shall I desert thee now that thou hast most need of me?

Dan. (*with emotion*). My lass, Heaven knows I never needed thee more than when thou wast left at my hut fourteen year since. But I've news to gladden thee—thine old playmate, Geoffrey Wynyard, is returned from sea, and is now on his road from Norwich to see thee.

Dor. Geoffrey returned? Oh, I am right glad! Oh, indeed, father, I am right glad! Truly thou has brought me fair news. And is he well—and hath he prospered?

Dan. Ay, and growed out o' knowledge. He was but a long-legged lad when he left, but he's a man now, and a goodly one, I warrant thee. See to him when he cometh, for he'll bide here wi' us. (*After a pause.*) My darlin'—thou'lt never leave me?

Dor. Never, while I live!

Dan. God bless thee, my child! [*Kisses her and exit.*

Dor. Geoffrey returned! and Geoffrey a stalwart mariner, and grown to man's estate! I can scarce believe it! Of a truth I could weep for very joy! I was but a child when he left, and now—I am seventeen! Geoffrey loved children,—it may be that he will be displeased with me now that I am a woman. I am rejoiced that I am decked in my new gown—it is more seemly than the russet, in which, methinks, I did look pale. Geoffrey a man!—my old playmate a man! Pity that I have not my new shoes, for they are comely; but they do compress my feet, and so pain me sorely. Nevertheless, I will put them on, for it behoveth a maiden to be neatly apparelled at all seasons.

Enter GEOFFREY.

Geof. Mistress Dorothy!

Dor. (*turning—she starts*). Geoffrey! Oh, Geoffrey! (*She rushes towards him.*)

Geof. Mistress Dorothy, I am right glad to hold thy little hand once more. I have had this moment in view for many, many months!

Dor. And I too, Master Geoffrey;—and oh, I am indeed rejoiced!

Geof. How thou art grown! A woman! By my right hand, a very woman!

Dor. Yes, Master Geoffrey, I am a woman now!

Geof. And a fair one, Mistress Dorothy! (*She turns.*) Nay, 'tis but truth; and truth is made to be told. May I not say that thou art fair?

Dor. Yes, Master Geoffrey, if thou thinkest so in good sooth.

Geof. In good sooth I do! It is strange to be back in the old village again, after three years of blue water. And yet it seems but yesterday that we tossed hay together in the five-acre field.

Dor. I think the time must speed more swiftly with those who seek their fortunes in distant lands, for though I have been happy and full of content, yet it seemeth more than three years since thy departure.

Geof. Yet barely three years have gone.

Dor. (*sighing*). It seemeth more.

Geof. The time hath sped with me despite the long night watches and the never-ending days of a calm tropical sea; for no hour is so long but that I can fill it with thoughts of thee, Mistress Dorothy.

Dor. I am rejoiced to know this, for my mind has often dwelt on thy fortunes. Many a time, when the old forge rocked in the wintry gale, my heart has been sad for thee, and I have lain awake weeping and praying for—for——

Geof. For me?

Dor. For all who go down to the sea in ships.

Geof. In truth, if the sea had no other charm I would be a sailor, that I might have thy prayers, Mistress Dorothy.

Dor. Nay, but if it consisted with thy duty to abandon thy perilous calling, and bide here with us for ever, my poor prayers

would still be thine, Master Geoffrey. But thou lovest the sea. (*Sighing.*)

Geof. All sailors love the sea.

Dor. It is strange, for the sea is cold and cruel and fierce, and many brave men are yearly swallowed up of it.

Geof. Dorothy, I love the sea dearly. There is but one love that is stronger in my heart—one love for which I would yield it up for ever and ever. Dear Dorothy, I have loved thee, boy and man, for ten years past; and I shall love thee, come what may, through my life. I came here to-day to tell thee this. I thought how to say it, but all that I thought of is gone—it's my heart that's speaking now and not my tongue. Bear with me, Dorothy, for every hope of my life—every waking and sleeping dream of ten years past—is in the words I'm speaking now.

Dor. Oh, Geoffrey—Geoffrey! I know not what to say!

Geof. Fear not for thy father, for I will quit the sea. Sir Jasper has offered to make me his secretary, and that is why I have come. But say nay, and I must needs go to sea again.

Dor. Oh, Geoffrey—let me think—let me think! Do I love thee? I cannot say. It may be that I do—and yet—thou must not go to sea! Oh, I have given no thought to it. Truly thou art dear to me, for I am rejoiced when thou comest, and I am sorely grieved when thou goest. Is that love?

Geof. Dorothy, let us inquire into this.

Dor. Right willingly, for if I love thee I would fain know it, that I might gladden thine heart by telling thee so.

Geof. Then attend to me, sweetheart, while I paint a picture for thee. We will suppose that I have given up the sea—that I have bought a little farm near at hand, and that I have come to live here, close to thee and thy father, for the rest of my life. Canst thou see the picture I am painting?

Dor. Ay. It is a pleasant picture.

Geof. Living here, close to thee, I naturally see thee very often.

Dor. (*pleased*). Every day?

Geof. Twice—maybe thrice—a day—for my horses need much shoeing, and I always bring them to the forge myself. Is that pleasant?

Dor. Very pleasant. And on Sabbath thou takest me to church?

Geof. Ay, save only when some other village gallant is beforehand with me and offers to escort thee thither, and in such case I am fain to take Farmer Such-a-one's daughter instead.

Dor. Nay, that were needless, for I would have no other escort than thou.

Geof. Yet it behoves one to be neighbourly, and if Farmer Such-a-one says to me, "Come and see Susan, for she's lonely and wants cheering"——

Dor. Susan?

Geof. That's the farmer's daughter.

Dor. Is she fair?

Geof. Very fair. What then?

Dor. Why, then, thou wouldst not go.

Geof. (*slyly*). And wherefore not?

Dor. Wherefore not? Oh, well, wherefore not indeed! Go to Susan if thou wilt, Geoffrey. It is not for me to hinder thee!

Geof. Well, then, I would *not* go. And so we live on—happy—very, very happy, for, say a year. But a change is at hand. My crops fail, my cattle die, and one evil night my homestead is burnt to the ground, and I am penniless!

Dor. Oh!

Geof. So there is nothing for it but to go to sea again, for three long years!

Dor. No, no, Geoffrey—oh no!

Geof. The time of parting draws near—a few weeks—a few days—a few hours. These few hours we have passed in silence, sitting hand in hand, thou and I. There are tears in my eyes, though I strive to check them, and there are sad thoughts in thine heart, also. Well, at last the horse is at the door, and it is time to go. I am at thy porch—one foot in stirrup—one hurried "God-speed"—and—I am gone!

Dor. Oh no, no, Geoffrey. I cannot bear it.

Geof. Months pass by and no news of me. The village seems blank at first without me, the walks to church seem long and lonely, and the evenings sad and cheerless. At last come tidings of a wrecked ship—thine heart beats quickly, for the name of the ship is the name of mine. Of all the crew but one man is saved, and that man's name—is not Geoffrey Wynyard—for Geoffrey has gone down to his death in the dark waters.

Dor. (*rising—throwing her arms round him*). No, no, Geoffrey, be silent. I cannot bear it—I cannot bear it—I cannot bear it; have mercy, for I cannot bear it!

Geof. And dost thou love me?

Dor. (*bashfully, hiding her head in his bosom*). Oh, Geoffrey! (*Pause.*)

Geof. Art thou happy there, Dorothy?

Dor. Passing happy! And thou?

Geof. Passing happy. (*He places a ring on her finger.*)

Dor. Oh, Geoffrey, what is this?

Geof. A ring that I have brought thee from Venice, where there are cunning workers in such matters. Let it stay there in earnest of another ring of plainer workmanship that is not beyond the craft of our English goldsmiths to fashion.

Dor. But I know not if I may wear it. It is a vanity—but it is very beautiful. See how it shineth! Oh, pity that I may not wear it, for in truth it is very beautiful.

Geof. Thou hast a silver chain with thy mother's locket on thy neck. Wear it on thy chain. Will it be a vanity if it is concealed beneath thy kerchief?

Dor. Nay; for none will know of it. (*Withdraws a silver locket from her bosom*). See, the clasp will not hold them both. Stay! the locket shall be thine, and thy ring shall take its place. (*Detaches locket and gives it to him. He kisses her.*)

Enter DAN'L DRUCE. *They stand confused.*

Dan. (*after a pause, sighs deeply*). Tell me all about it, my pretty.

Geof. Master Dan'l—I——

Dan. No, lad—no—not from thee. I'd liefer hear it from my pretty.

Dor. (*going to him and putting her arms round his neck*). Dear father, Geoffrey hath told me that he loveth me, and would fain take me to be his wife——

Dan. Ay, ay, lass—go on——

Dor. He loveth me very dearly, father, and will quit the sea to bide with us here.

Dan. Go on——

Dor. He loveth me so dearly that it would sadden his life if I were to wed with another.

Dan. Well?

Dor. So, dear father, as I would not cause him sorrow I will not wed with another. (*Hiding her face on his shoulder.*)

Dan. So soon! so soon! Nay, hang there a bit longer, my lass; for thou'rt all I have, and thou'rt going from me ower soon, and of thine own free will. Dorothy, oh, Dorothy, the hope and stay of my poor old life! my saving angel! my saving angel! It's hard to part with thee, Dorothy. He will not love thee as I love thee. (*With an effort.*) I'm but a thankless

man. It was to be, and 'twould better fit me to rejoice that thou hast found a brave and honest man to tend thee when I am gone. Get thee within, and dry thine eyes. I'll do thy weeping for thee, Dorothy! (*Exit* DOROTHY *into the cottage.*) It's come sudden, my lad, it's come sudden, and I doan't rightly know how to shift wi'out her. She's been more than life to me, Dolly has. I was a hard and bitter man when she was left with me fourteen year since,—for I'd been cruelly warped—cruelly warped. But when things are at their worst, like as not they'll mend; and from the time my darling was sent to me (by a miracle as I then thought, for I'd been brought up 'mong folk as see a miracle in 'most everything) a change crep' over me, and bit by bit my cruel old heart growed soft again. I was a foul-tongued fellow then, but I couldna swear afore an angel come straight from heaven. I was cruel and hard, but I couldna sit glowerin' at mankind wi' her little arms round my neck, and her soft cheek agin' my wicked old face. Then it come about that Dolly must be taught her Bible; but I'd no Bible—so, wi' a shamefaced lie on my tongue, I borrowed a good book, and we spelt it out together. And many's the time as the old half-forgotten words come back to me, bit by bit, and I called to mind when I'd first learnt 'em as a child. I laid my head down on the book, and wept like a woman. And as it was for me (God help me!) to teach her right from wrong, I learnt as I taught, and the Light come to us together—the old man and the little child—and as she growed in knowledge, my right self growed in strength—and such as I am—hale, hearty, and happy—livin' by the sweat o' my brow—owin' no man, fearin' none, and lovin' all, why she has made me, God bless her!

Geof. And thou hast never seen her father since?

Dan. No; though for years I never passed a strange face but I peered into it—for I knowed every line o' his, though I never heerd his name. Knowed it! Why, it burnt in my eyeballs, so that I see it in the dark! I seed it everywhere—I seed it in the forge, and be sure I raked it out!—I seed it red-hot on my anvil, and be sure I hammered with a will! After a while (but it was a weary while!) the thought come that mayhap he had perished in the gale, so I thought less about it; and Dolly seemed more like my own. Yet the old fear comes back, odd times, and, oh, Geoffrey, it's like enough she'll be taken from me yet.

Enter DOROTHY *from cottage.*

Dor. Oh, father, a gentleman, whose horse hath cast a shoe, hath need of thy services in the yard.

Dan. A gentleman, eh?

Dor. It is Master Reuben Haines, Sir Jasper's bailiff. He passed this way twice before to prepare for Sir Jasper's arrival; but that was when thou wast away at Norwich.

Dan. And what manner of man is he?

Dor. A strange man, full of unmeaning jests, who maketh faces at me which doth fright me much, and he rolleth his eyes in a manner fearful to behold.

Dan. A town fashion, Dolly, who knows? Ha! ha! Take no heed of his faces. Make him welcome, for there's no foreseein'; it may serve us, one day, to stand well with the bailiff! Come, Geoffrey, and lend me a hand. I'll see to his horse.

[GEOFFREY *kisses* DOROTHY *and exit with* DAN'L.

Enter REUBEN *in riding dress, from cottage.*

Reu. Good morrow, pretty Mistress Dorothy! We have not forgotten one another, I see! And how has time sped with thee since I saw thee last? Has it crept, crawled, drawled, dragged, and dawdled for lack of a certain merry old man who whiled away a certain half-hour with thee two months since with curious quip, quaint retort, and surprising conundrum? Dost thou remember that half-hour, Dorothy? *I* do. In the course of it I said many rare things to thee, complimentary and insinuating things of amatory significance and connubial import, neatly disguised, or, as one may say, embalmed, in an outer husk of delicate epigram. And thou didst listen! Ye gods! how thou didst listen! I love a good listener.

Dor. Sir, I do indeed remember your coming; but as for your sayings, I was silent, for I understood them not. Is—is Sir Jasper at hand?

Enter DAN'L DRUCE, *unobserved, at back.*

Reu. He will be here anon. Some village clowns are plaguing him with an address—a scurvy long one, and writ in very false jingle. I heard the first lines thereof; it began:

"Sir Jasper Combe, to welcome you
We do as much as we can do:
Here live and die—to House and Tomb
We welcome you, Sir Jasper Combe!"

It did so move me to laughter that Sir Jasper, who hath no sense of the ridiculous, did order me to ride on. But I doubt not that even *he* is laughing heartily thereat, by this time!

Dan. (*who has heard the last few lines*). Nay, sir, but if Sir Jasper deserve all that men say of him, he will scarcely hold in scorn that which poor humble folks have writ in his praise.

Reu. (*to* DOROTHY). Who is this old gentleman?

Dan. I am Dan'l Druce,—no gentleman, but a hard-working blacksmith, very much at your honour's service. (*Looking at him.*) I was away when you last come to the village, yet I think I've seen your honour's face.

Reu. It is very like. It is a striking face. I don't like it myself, but others do, so I yield to the majority. It is a good face.

Dan. I cannot recall where I have seen it.

Reu. It signifieth not—thou wilt have plenty of time to study it,—for thou wilt see it every quarter-day whilst thou livest. Despite its inherent goodliness, it will come to be a face of evil significance to thee, speaking, as it will, of raised rents, rapid distraint, and uncompromising ejection!

Dan. I'm a punctual tenant, sir, and I fear no man. Dorothy, draw this gentleman some ale while I look to his horse. [*Exit.*

Reu. And take thy time, for we are very well thus, eh, Dorothy? (DOROTHY *going.*) Nay, do not go. Never heed the ale. I'd rather take a long look at thy pretty face than a long pull at thy village brew. The one is sweet, I know—the other is sour, I'll swear. Come hither, Dorothy.

Dor. Nay, sir, I——

Reu. I have news to tell thee, Dorothy—thou art a kind of wife of mine, for I have, in a manner, married thee—intellectually and reflectively; or, as one may say, in a mental or moral sense have I married thee. I have, as it were, invented thee as my wife, and the invention is none the less mine because a scurvy mechanic (to wit, the parson) hath not yet hammered in the rivets. (*Aside.*) A quip!

Dor. Sir, I do not rightly understand thy talk, but it seemeth to me that thou makest jest of solemn things.

Reu. Nay, this time I am in earnest. If thou wilt be my wife I will so coll thee, coax thee, cosset thee, court thee, cajole

thee, with deftly turned compliment, pleasant whimsy, delicate jest and tuneful madrigal—I will so pleasantly perplex thee with quaint paradox, entertaining aphorism, false conclusion and contradiction in terms—I will so edify thee with joyous anecdote, tales of court and camp, tales of love, hate, and intrigue, tales of murder, rapine, and theft, merry tales, sad tales, long tales, short tales, quip, crank, retort, repartee, and rejoinder, that thy wedded life shall seem one never-ending honeymoon, and thou shalt find but one fault with me—that I clog thee with sweets! (*Takes her round waist.*)

Dor. Nay, sir, I pray you, remove your hand! Sir, you are unmannerly! I pray you, desist!

Enter SIR JASPER; DOROTHY *runs to him.*

Oh, sir, defend me from this wicked man.

Jas. Why, Reuben Haines, thou art at thine old tricks again!

Reu. At *our* old tricks, your honour!

Jas. Harkee, sirrah. Let bygones go by. Times are changed with me, as thou knowest well, and if thou valuest thy stewardship, adapt thy morals to those of thy master. If thou sayest or doest aught to anger this gentle maiden, I'll lay my whip across thy shoulders, as I have done ofttimes ere this.

Reu. (*aside*). We are virtuous now, but time was when we would have angered her in company.

Dor. Nay, sir, I pray you, bear with him.

Reu. (*aside*). She pleadeth for me! Bless her pretty face, she pleadeth for me!

Jas. Has the rascal, then, found favour in thine eyes?

Dor. (*aside to* SIR JASPER). Oh no; but whenever he cometh to the forge he sayeth such strange things, and looketh at me with such strange looks, that I fear he is sorely afflicted, and not to be held accountable for his deeds.

Jas. (*laughing heartily*). Why, in truth, I sometimes think so too. (*To* REUBEN.) Get thee to the inn, sir; we shall lie there to-night: as for the whipping, why the maiden's intercession hath saved thee this once.

Reu. She pleadeth for me! Bless their hearts, they're all alike! They all plead for me! [*Exit* REUBEN.

Jas. And now, pretty maiden, tell me, who art thou?

Dor. So please your worship, I am Dorothy Druce, only daughter of Dan'l Druce, the blacksmith, and your worship's tenant.

Jas. (*looking kindly at her*). He's a kind father to thee, I'll be sworn.

Dor. He is kind to me and to all. In very truth I think he must be the best man in the whole world.

Jas. And thou tendest him very carefully?

Dor. Yes, indeed. I am with him from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof; and we love each other with a love that passeth all telling.

Jas. (*after a pause*). Dorothy, I once had a little child who promised to grow up to be just such a pretty lass as thou. But we—we were separated many years ago, and I have never seen her since!

Dor. Oh, poor gentleman!

Jas. Poor, indeed—for I declare to thee, Dorothy, that I would give all my substance, were it ten times what it is, to have her with me in my old age. But though I have sought her high and low for many a weary year, I have found no tidings of her; and so I must needs go on to the end—a solitary old man, uncared for and alone! There's a doleful tale, little Dorothy!

Dor. Indeed, it is passing sad, and my heart bleeds for your worship. I am even more grieved for thy daughter, who hath lost the fostering care and guidance of so worthy a gentleman. I am sure she would have loved your worship very dearly.

Jas. (*moved*). I know not. It may be so, and yet—I showed myself but a careless and unloving father to her when we were parted. But her mother died of grief—and—and I would fain make amends, I would fain make amends! Yes, Dorothy, it would have gone hard with me but I would have made her love me!

Enter DAN'L.

Who is this good fellow?

Dor. It is my father, of whom I spoke unto your worship. Father, this is Sir Jasper Combe.

Dan. (*heartily*). At your worship's service, Sir Jasper. I've naught to say, sir, but what's been said by better men—"Welcome to Combe-Raven." I'll go bail my Dorothy's said it already.

Jas. Indeed, she has given me a very kindly greeting, Master Druce. I was telling thy daughter how I came to be wifeless and childless; and how, desolate as I am, I envy thee thy good fortune in having so fair a little nurse to cosset thee in thine old age. Take heed, though, that she be not taken from thee, and at brief notice too, one of these days! (*During this speech* DAN'L *has gradually recognized* SIR JASPER. *He is*

stupefied with terror, and staggers back on anvil.) I say, take care that she be not taken from thee one of these days.

Dan (*still stupefied*). By whom? Taken from me by whom?

Jas. (*laughing*). Oh, never fear me, Dan'l—by some far younger man than I!

Dan. Ay, ay—to be married. Ah, mebbe, mebbe!

Dor. Father, is aught amiss?

Dan. (*faintly*). No, lass, no; take no heed o' me.

Dor. (*leading him to stool*). My father hath been working in the heat of the day, and he is faint.

Dan. Yes, I've—I've been working hard. Take no heed o' me. I'm better now. I'm an old man, and weaker than o' yore. Take no heed.

Jas. I'll send thee strong wines that shall put the courage and strength of youth into thine old heart, Dan'l Druce. There, there, bear up, man. And Dorothy must come to the Hall, Dan'l. Old Bridget shall take good care of her; and I own I should like to see how the old place would shine in the sunlight shed by so fair a little lady. There, be of good cheer, man; I did but jest when I spake of thy daughter leaving thee.

Dan. Ay, ay—thou didst but jest, eh?

Jas. Why, to be sure. (*Aside.*) To think that those few light words should have so shaken him. (*Looking at* DOROTHY.) Well, I can understand it. (*To* DAN'L, *after a pause.*) Master Druce, I'm an old man now, and a very grave and sober old man too. I had a fair young wife once; she had eyes like thy daughter's eyes. There's a strange whim in my head, but I'm an old man, and—and—and—may I kiss thy little daughter?

Dan. (*much moved*). Ay, ay, thou—thou mayst kiss her if thou wilt!

[DOROTHY *goes up to* SIR JASPER, *who kisses her on the forehead.*

Jas. God bless thee, maiden. Dan'l Druce, I thank thee!

[*Exit* SIR JASPER.

Dor. Oh, father, didst thou hear? I am to go to the Hall! I have heard that it is a goodly place, as big as a village, and bravely decked with velvets and rich silks and pictures and vast mirrors! Oh, I long to see the mirrors! Then the gardens are beyond everything fair to view, and there are deer in the park, and a spacious lake, and carriages and horses too! Oh, it must be brave to live in so fair a place!

Dan. (*in a broken voice*). Why, Dorothy—these things are but vanities. Oh, Dorothy, my darling, be content with thy lot!

Dor. Nay, father—but indeed I envy not Sir Jasper. I

grieve to think how solitary the poor gentleman must be, all alone in so vast a house, with neither wife nor child to solace him in his old age!

Dan. (*anxiously*). Did he tell thee of his child?

Dor. Ay, speaking gravely, yet kindly, as of a sorrow still unhealed. And when he told me how he lost the maiden many years ago, and how he has vainly sought her ever since, my heart yearned to him, for the tears glistened in his eyes. Methinks a daughter must needs love such a father, for he is a noble gentleman.

Dan. Nay, thou knowest him not. He did not deal rightly by the girl. He left her to perish—to perish, Dolly—that he might save his own life. He is rightly served. The sins of his youth are visited upon him in his old age. It is just, it is just. *I* would not have quitted *thee*, my child, my child!

Dor. In truth, I am very sure of that. I cannot think that there is in this world peril or necessity so dire as to part us twain!

Dan. Thou'lt never leave me, Dolly?

Dor. Never!

Dan. Come what may?

Dor. Come what may! (*He kisses her.*) [*Exit* DOROTHY.

Dan. (*looking after her*). Oh, it's hard, arter so long; for the heart o' my body is not so dear to me as yon poor little girl! Oh, Dolly, it canna be right,—it canna be right. Thou'st taken to me as to a father. If thou wast my own flesh and blood thou couldst not be dearer to me, nor I to thee. And now—arter so long.—It canna be right.

Enter GEOFFREY.

Geof. Why, Master Druce, thou hast tears in thine eyes!

Dan. Ay, lad, and cause for 'em in my heart! Geoffrey, there's a heavy blow come on me. I—I told thee of the cruel thankless father who left my girl wi' me—my Dorothy—*thy* Dorothy——

Geof. Yes!

Dan. I—I have seen him, Geoffrey! Here—here, I have seen him! Him as thou'rt here to meet,—that's Dolly's father!

Geof. Sir Jasper! Impossible!

Dan. Yes, I tell thee, 'twas him. He didn't know me—*but I knowed him!* Geoffrey—my only hope lies wi' thee. Thou must wed Dorothy—ay, at once too. He cannot take her from *thee*,—and we will all go hence to a place of safety—to-morrow—to-morrow!

Geof. (*after a pause*). Master Druce, thou art a tender-hearted, right-doing man,—and it's not for a boy like me to shape thy course.

Dan. Why, what dost thou mean?

Geof. If this man, Sir Jasper Combe, is indeed her father——

Dan. Her father? He cast her from him! He left her to perish! Her father? Heaven had given him the richest treasure that Heaven can give, and he flung it into my lap as he'd fling a coin to a beggar! The trust that he forsook I took up. The child that he plucked from his bosom I took to mine. There let it bide, Geoffrey Wynyard, there let it bide!

Geof. Yet bethink thee—the poor lone gentleman hath paid a bitter price for his wickedness; and though he did a cruel and reckless thing in abandoning her, yet grief and penitence have wrought a great change in him, and the laws of Heaven and of man give him a right over her that none may gainsay.

Dan. And have I earned no right in these fourteen years? Why, think what she is to me! what we are to each other! She has vouchsafed me her love, and for it I kneel down and worship her! She has turned my heart to man, and for it I kneel down and worship her. She has shown me the Truth, and for it I kneel down and worship her. We are life and death, body and soul, all in all to each other. And now thou wouldst have me say to this unworthy man, "Here is the daughter thou didst abandon in thy peril. For fourteen years I have reared her as mine own; but as thou didst beget her, so take her; I did but hold her in trust for thee that thou mightest reclaim her when it seemed good to thee to do so." It may be that this is my duty, Geoffrey Wynyard; but I canna do it—I canna do it.

Geof. Thy case is a hard one—it is not for me to judge.

Dan. Thou hast rightly said it is not for thee to judge. Moreover, bethink thee, thou lovest her. If this man, her father, reclaims her, he will take her from thee, and raise her to a station as far above thine as thine is above hers.

Geof. Art thou so sure that Sir Jasper is indeed her father?

Dan. That's true! that's very true! I know not that he *is* her father! I cannot tell that. We judge men by their deeds, Geoffrey, not their words; and he may have lied. Come, that's well thought of, Geoffrey! But we'll go hence, Dolly and I—no one shall know—thou shalt join us later; and when thou and she are married, and he cannot take her from thee, why then, maybe, we'll—oh, Geoffrey—thou wilt not betray me—thou wilt not betray *her!* Promise me that!

Geof. (*sighing*). I promise!

Dan. (*turns*). Remember, Geoffrey, thou'st promised. [*Exit.*

Geof. In truth I am in a sore strait; for Sir Jasper is a man of proud blood, who would laugh to scorn such humble love as mine. And oh, Dorothy, if thou art taken from me, why, my life may go too! And if *I* cannot yield thee up, how can I ask *him* to do so! Oh, Dan'l Druce, Dan'l Druce, my heart is with thine in this thing, and I'll keep thy secret, never fear!

Enter REUBEN.

Reu. Why, whom have we here in Dorothy's house? A whelp—a very whelp, cur, or puppy, to be beckoned to, whistled to, frowned at, scowled at, whipped with whips, beaten with sticks, and slapped with the flat of hand!

Geof. Your servant, sir. Who are you?

Reu. Why, sir, I am an old horse-soldier, and yet not so very old neither but that I can wield quarter-staff or give the Cornish fling as well as another. No mere trooper neither, but a sergeant of horse, if you please; and one that hath cut his way through war's intestine, as a hot knife cuts butter. One who has so snicked, chipped, chopped, slashed, cut, drilled, and carbonaded, with sword, with pistolet, with mace, with arquebus, with petronel, and with what-not, that he'd make no more of passing a rapier through that boy's body of thine than of spitting a penny herring. And now, sir, who are *you?*

Geof. Why, sir, I am a sailor, and I hate brag.

Reu. Come, come, civil words, young master, lest we quarrel; and when *I* quarrel, sextons lay in tolling grease and grave-diggers strip to their work. Dost thou know this Dan'l Druce?

Geof. I do.

Reu. A comfortable old man, they tell me, and one who can portion his pretty Dorothy. Pretty Dorothy and I are very good friends. She listens when I talk, which many won't. (GEOFFREY *makes an angry gesture.*) And talking of pretty Dorothy, we have here a bauble or locket, or, as one may say, a trinket that belongeth to her, I'll go bail. (*Picking up locket which* GEOFFREY *dropped.*)

Geof. Sir, that locket is mine.

Reu. It is very like—it is very like, yet for that I have but thy word. I care for no man's word—no, not even for mine own, for though it is as good as another's, yet it is worth nothing. If the trinket be thine, describe it with circumstance, and I will give it up to thee.

Enter DAN'L, *unperceived. He listens in great agitation.*

Geof. It is fashioned like a heart, and bears an inscription "To the best loved of all," and it is dated seventeen years since. It is a love-token, sir, and I desire you to yield it up without further parley.

Reu. (*who has recognized it*). Why, surely, I should know this locket well. From whom did you receive it?

Geof. (*taking it from him*). That is a question that I have no will to answer. It is a token of betrothal—let that suffice.

Reu. But it don't suffice. Do you know who I am? I am bailiff to Sir Jasper Combe——

Geof. Sir Jasper Combe!

Reu. Ay; and I recognize that locket as one that he placed about the neck of his missing daughter the very day he abandoned her. Come, sir, from whom did you receive it? It is a love-token—a token of betrothal. To whom are you betrothed?

Geof. (*much agitated*). I decline to say.

Enter DOROTHY *at back.* DAN'L *stops her, and motions her to be silent. They both listen together.*

Reu. Shall I hazard a conjecture or guess? Thou art here, making free in the blacksmith's forge. The blacksmith hath a daughter—her name is Dorothy. Shall we say that it is to Dorothy that thou art betrothed?

Geof. (*with an effort to speak unconcernedly*). What, Dorothy Druce? No, no, Master Bailiff, not Dorothy Druce!

[DOROTHY *expresses surprise and pain.*

Reu. And yet I noticed that when I spake lightly of her thou didst start in anger, and flush up in a fashion ridiculous to behold. I have the eye of a hawk.

Geof. (*confused*). Oh — for that — it is true that I have laughed and jested with Dorothy, but you know we sailors have a special license for such love frolics. We mean nothing by them. It is said of us that we have a wife in every port—well, that's a slander, but at least I'll plead guilty to a sweetheart in every village. [DOROTHY *weeps on* DAN'L'S *bosom.*

Reu. Ha! Thou art a shameless young reprobate by thine own showing. It will go hard but Sir Jasper will elicit the truth. We shall meet again! [*Exit* REUBEN.

DAN'L *and* DOROTHY *come forward*, DAN'L *trembling with rage*, DOROTHY *weeping.*

Dan. So, Geoffrey Wynward! The blow that is to bring me to my grave has been dealt by thine hand! The secret which was thine and mine has been revealed by thee! Oh, thief of more than hard-earned gold! Oh, slayer of more than human life, are there no laws to fit such crime as thine!

Dor. Father! father! hurt him not!

Geof. Master Druce—indeed, I knew not——

Dan. Thou knewest not! Will there be more mercy in this man's heart because thou knewest not? Will the last years of my poor old lonely life be less desolate because thou knewest not?

Dor. Oh, father, father, what sayest thou?

Dan. Nay, girl, stop me not! (*Taking up a hammer.*) Geoffrey Wynyard, there are injuries that laws can measure, and laws are made for 'em. There are injuries that no laws can measure, and wi' them we deal ourselves, and wreak our vengeance wi' our own right hands. (*To* DOROTHY, *who interposes.*) Stand aside, girl; I'm a weak old man, but there's devil enough in me to deal wi' such as him.

[DOROTHY, *kneeling, holds his arm.*

Dor. No, no, father, yield not to thy wrath—he hath denied me—he hath dealt lightly with my love—and there's an end. Oh, harm him not, oh, harm him not! Pardon him, even as I pardon him; and let him depart in peace.

Dan. (*with a violent effort to be calm*). Ay, ay, thou recallest me to myself. He hath dealt lightly wi' thy love—and there's an end. Heed not the words I spake; they were empty words, and had no meaning—heed them not. Geoffrey Wynyard, thou hast spoken lightly of my child, thou hast denied her who gave thee her heart. It was ill done. Quit my roof and let me see thee no more. I—I pardon thee. Go.

Geof. Master Druce, have pity, for my tongue is tied—I—I may not speak!

Dan. Go!

Geof. Dorothy, one word. Hear what I have to say.

Dor. (*with an effort*). Geoffrey, thou hast denied me. I love thee—but—thou must go!

[GEOFFREY *goes out sadly. When he has gone*, DOROTHY *falls sobbing at* DAN'L'S *feet.*

Dan. My child! My child! [*Music.*

ACT III.

SCENE.—*Interior of* DRUCE'S *cottage. Time, evening.* DOROTHY *is discovered pale and weak, sitting by the fire, reading an old and tattered letter, her head resting in her hand.* DAN'L *discovered at back—he has a bundle and stick in his hand as if prepared for a journey. He is pale and anxious.*

Dan. Eventide, and he's not yet come to claim her. It's weary waitin' for a blow that is to fall, and we'll wait no longer. It's hard to have to creep away from the old forge, like a thief in the night, and begin the weary struggle anew, God knows where! But that it should ha' come through him whom I loved like a son, and whom I'd ha' taken to my heart as a son—it's doubly hard it should ha' come through him! (*Looking at* DOROTHY.) Poor maiden! She thinks him false to her. Well, it's better so. I'll keep that thought alive; 'twill account for much that I may not explain. One word would lift that sorrow from her gentle heart; but it must not be spoke—not yet—not yet! (*Aloud.*) What art thou readin', lass?

Dor. It is the letter he wrote to me from Morocco, two years since. I am bidding farewell to it ere I destroy it—for he is betrothed to another, and I may not keep it now. He spake to me in jest! Oh, father, it's hard to bear.

Dan. Ay, ay—hard to bear, Dolly—hard to bear.

Dor. And to vaunt his unfaithfulness in the ears of a very stranger! It was a cruel boast—for I loved him with all my heart!

Dan. Better learn the truth now than later—as I did—as I did. Early fall, light fall, Dolly. When my sorrow come it had like to ha' crushed the life out o' me—but thou'rt young, my child, and time will heal thy wound.

Dor. If he had but known how I loved him,—but in truth I knew it not myself. It is hard to bear, for he had truth in his face, and I doubted nothing!

Dan. Trust no faces, Dolly—they lie—they lie.

Dor. Nay, but it is not like thee to say these bitter things.

Dan. More like me than thou wottest of, Dolly. I have told thee what I was afore thou camest to me—the past fourteen

year are gone like a dream, and I'm wakin' from it, Dolly, I'm wakin' from it. (*Takes up his bundle.*)

Dor. Why, father, art thou going away?

Dan. Ay, lass,—we're both goin' away.

Dor. (*surprised*). To-night?

Dan. To-night. Make thy bundle, for time presses.

Dor. But whither are we going?

Dan. Whither? What odds whither, so that we leave this place! Out into the cold world—it matters little where. Thou'lt fret here—it's better to take thee hence—for a time—only for a time. Get thy bundle quickly—take all thou hast. I'll tell thee more anon—we've no time to lose.

Dor. (*going*). As thou wilt, father. (*Aside.*) To-night! Oh, Geoffrey, Geoffrey, this is indeed the end! [*Exit.*

Dan. Poor child, poor child! My heart smites me for deceivin' her—for harmful as he's been to me, he never had thought for aught but her. I'm a'most sorry I was so rough wi' him—he did not know—but the harm's done, and there's no undoin' it! So, old forge, the time has come when thou and I must part for ever! May he who comes arter me have as good cause to love thee as I have, for I have been ower happy here! (*Weeping.*)

REUBEN *has entered and overheard the last few lines.*

Reu. What, Dan'l Druce on the eve of a journey? Nay, thou'lt take no journey to-night, I promise thee. Unstrap thy pack and burn thy staff; for thou'lt eat here, drink here, sleep here, make money here, lose money here, laugh with joy, frown with anger, groan with pain—mope here, sicken here, dwindle here, and die here; take an old warrior's word for it!

Dan'l. Reuben Haines, art thou here to take her from me?

Reu. No, Master Dan'l, I am *not* here to take her from thee—and yet, in a sense, *yes*, Master Dan'l, I *am* here to take her from thee. Weigh these words well, and store them away in the museum of thy mind, for they are rare words—containing, as they do, truth commingled with wisdom, which is an observable union, as these qualities consort but rarely together—for he hath no wisdom who tells the plain truth, and he hath no need to tell the plain truth who hath wisdom enough to do without it. It is a paradox.

Dan. (*impatiently*). To the devil wi' thy chop-logic, I canna wait for it. Speak out, and let me know the best and the worst. Does—does thy master know?

Reu. He does *not* know, as yet. And why does he not know? Because the mighty should be merciful—and I have refrained.

Dan. If thou art not mocking at my sorrow, speak plainly.

Reu. Then observe. I am a Potent Magician, or, if thou preferrest it, a Benevolent Fairy, who hath certain gifts to dispose of. On the one hand, I have Family Union, Domestic Happiness, and Snug Old Age—on the other, Blank Misery, Abject Despair, and Desolation, utter and complete. Which shall I give to Sir Jasper, and which to thee? Now, I am a pleasant old gentleman—well to do—not so very old neither, yet old enough to marry. Dorothy and I are good friends; she listens to me when I talk, which many won't; it is a good sign and augurs well, for I love a good listener. How say you? Come, give me *thy* daughter, and I will give thee Sir Jasper's daughter. (*Aside.*) Ha! ha! It is neatly put. It is a quip.

Dan. Give thee my Dorothy! (*With an effort to be calm.*) No, no—it canna be—she is promised. True, I drove him forth; but still she loves him. No, no—I canna do that—I canna do that!

Reu. Reflect. Sir Jasper will take her from thee for ever—thou wilt never behold her again. He will drive thee from thy forge, and thou wilt be a desolate old vagabond, while she is learning day by day to forget thee, and to give her love to another. Thou refusest? It is well done. Brave old man! Thou shrinkest not from the troubles that environ thee, though they threaten to crush thee utterly; and so I say, brave old man! (*Going.*)

Dan. Nay—stay—one moment—give me time to think. How am I to do this thing? And yet—I will consent—that is, if Dorothy will. I will ask her—nay, I will persuade her. God forgive me!

Enter DOROTHY.

Dorothy, my child, come hither. I have somewhat to say to thee. I—I am not long for this world, and when I am gone—— Oh, Dorothy, bear with what I have to say! This man—this Reuben Haines—he loveth thee, and would make thee his wife.

Dor. Oh, father——

Dan. Ay, I know what thou wouldst say—thou lovest Geoffrey, but bear in mind, he loves thee not—he spake slightingly of thee—he did deny thee—he loveth other women; thou

didst hear him say as much. See, this man will love thee better than Geoffrey. He—he is not a young man—he is of sober age, and a man of good substance. Oh, Dorothy, my child, have pity on me!

Dor. I cannot answer—I am lost in wonder.

Dan. Dorothy, my little girl—for a reason which I canna tell thee, it concerns my life—ay, my life—that thou shouldst take this man. I—I have been a kind father to thee, have I not? I have asked naught of thee till now. Oh, my child, it is for thine happiness as well as for mine. If thou didst but know! If thou didst but know!

Reu. Behold, maiden, I am worth consideration. I am not as other old men are. In all but years I am a boy—a very boy.

Dor. My father, I know naught of the sorrow that hangs over thee, but it must needs be heavy if thou canst suffer this man to say this thing to me!

Dan. Dorothy—have patience; if to yield up my life would serve thee, I would yield it, ten times told—the time may soon come when I shall prove thee this—for I canna live alone!

Dor. Father, I know naught of this man but what is ill—nevertheless, as thou hast been to me as my father, and I to thee as thy child, bound in all lawful things to obey thee, so will I obey thee even in this. Sir, I cannot love you, for my heart is given, but if my father bids me, I must needs do his bidding. (*Kneels.*) Oh, my father, if the breaking of my heart can save thee, it is thine to break!

Reu. It is dutifully spoken. It is a bargain. Give me thine hand on it, Dan'l Druce. Set thine heart at rest—it is settled.

Dan. (*furiously*). Ay, it is settled. Get thee hence, now and for ever, and do thy worst. Dorothy, forgive me—'twas but for a moment I wavered—I am strong again now. (*To* Reuben.) Thou hast a master—thou owest him a duty. Go, do it—I'll do mine. We will wait here, she and I, and when the blow comes, we'll bear it together.

Reu. Dan'l Druce, I warn thee——

Dan. And I warn thee, Reuben Haines! Quit my roof, and that quickly, if thou settest value on thy blood, for it's ill trifling wi' me now! As yet, I'm master here—'twon't be fur long, but while I am, I'll be obeyed. Get thee hence—take thy damned face out, I tell 'ee, lest I do that which none can undo. Go! Do thy worst!

Reu. Brave old man! Thou defiest me to my very face, and I honour thee for it. There is sore tribulation in store for thee, likewise much bitter wailing and anguish without end. Yet

thou shrinkest not. It is well done, and damme, I honour thee for it. Brave old man! [*Exit* REUBEN.

Dor. Father, thou wast wont to tell me thy sorrow—hide not from me the source of this bitter grief. Am I not in all things thy daughter, and who should comfort thee if I may not?

Dan. My child, I've naught to hide from thee now. The reed on which I leant is broken—and—— (*Knock.* DAN'L *starts in terror.*) Who's there?

Geof. (*without*). Master Druce!

Dor. It is Geoffrey.

Dan. He had best not see thee. Get thee hence, I'll open to him.

Dor. Father, deal gently with him for the love I bear him.

[*Exit* DOROTHY. DAN'L *opens the door.*

Enter GEOFFREY.

Geof. Master Dan'l, I'm going to sea. I have written to refuse the post that Sir Jasper would have given me, and I am going to-night. I come to pray your pardon for the sorrow I have brought upon your home. Give me that before I go.

Dan. Ay, I pardon thee, my lad. Thou didst not know. Heaven prosper thee. Is that all?

Geof. I have something to ask about—about Mistress Dorothy.

Dan. Too late! She is not mine to give. Her father—he's coming fur to take her from me. Oh, Geoffrey, he's comin' to take her from me, and I'm waiting here for the blow to fall! I'm waiting here for my death!

Geof. I did not come to seek her love—I know that that has gone from me for ever. Master Dan'l, she heard me deny her, and she believes that I spake in earnest. I'm going from her now—for ever; there's no chance that she'll ever see me again. I think I should go with a lighter heart if I knew that when I'm gone and there's many a mile of stormy water betwixt us, some one would tell her that I'm not so bad and cruel and heartless as she thinks me—if some one would tell her that it was for *her* sake that I denied her—for her sake and for thine. I think I could go with a lighter heart if I knew she would be sure to think rightly of me in the end. That's all I've got to say.

Dan. My lad, I've dealt hardly with thee, but I was sorely put about and not rightly master o' myself. If it lay wi' me, I'd give my girl to thee wi' a light heart; but, my poor lad, it doan't lay wi' me now. He's coming fur to take her from me!

(*Knock.*) At last! at last! Sir Jasper is here. Get thee within there. (*Pointing to inner room.*) I have business wi' this man.

[*Exit* GEOFFREY *into room as* DAN'L *opens door and admits* SIR JASPER *and* REUBEN.

Jas. So, Dan'l Druce, thou art the man who for fourteen long years has hidden my daughter away from me!

Dan. Sir, I am indeed he.

Jas. Oh, shame upon thee—shame upon thee!

Dan. I crave your mercy, for I knew not her father's name till to-day.

Jas. Yet it would seem that, having learnt it, thou wouldst nevertheless have fled with her, had not this good fellow arrested thy flight.

Dan. I have naught to say that your honour's kind heart will not more fitly say for me. We love one another dearly. Truly in the bitterness of my grief I had thought to flee with her, but my better self prevailed, and I stayed.

Reu. Credit him not, sir, for he lieth. He was in the very nick of departure when I interposed, and with stern upbraiding, withering invective, and threat of instant death, did bid him await your honour's commands. The palsied coward trembled and obeyed.

Dan. Nay, sir, this man—this traitorous man—offered to keep the matter from you for ever if I would consent to give him the child to wife. She will herself bear witness to this.

Jas. (*to* REUBEN). Art thou indeed guilty of this treachery?

Reu. Why, sir, there is a measure of truth even in this fellow's speech, inasmuch as I did indeed say it; but (herein lurks the humour of the thing) I did it but to try him. It was, as it were, a subtle essay or delicate test, prepared and carried out to the life with much ingenuity, in pursuit of the grandest of all studies—the conduct of a man under the influence of extraordinary temptation. I am a philosopher!

Jas. Thy philosophy shall be severely tried. Deliver thy books and papers to Master Geoffrey Wynyard, whom I appoint steward in thy place. Thy stewardship is at an end. Begone!

Reu. But, sir—consider——

Jas. Begone, I say, and let me see thee no more!

Reu. (*at door*). I am a philosopher!

Jas. Begone! (*Exit* REUBEN, *dolefully.*) Now, Dan'l Druce, if thou hast aught to say in defence of thy conduct, I am prepared to hear it.

Dan. Aught to say? No, sir, I've naught to say worth saying. Thou'st seen the maiden—thou'st seen how fair she is—

how good she is—how pure, and gentle, and tender, and true she is. That says more for me than I could say for myself. She softened my stubborn heart—she made me a man. I've learnt to look on her as my daughter—she on me as her father. We've bin all in all to each other; and at the thought o' losin' of her my poor old heart's 'most broken in twain. I dunno as I've any more for to say. No, sir, that's all. (*Sighing.*)

Jas. I am sorry for you—but you have brought this grief upon yourself; you have been guilty of gross injustice both to myself and to the girl.

Dan. (*furious*). What!

Jas. Knowing as you did that enquiries would certainly be made for the child, you nevertheless stole away from the town, and left no clue whatever as to your destination.

Dan. Knowin' as I did! How did I know—what was there for to tell me? Was it the love that her father showed for her when he left her to perish on that stormy Norfolk coast? Did that reckless profligate set such value on his treasure as to make it so sure he would ever come for it agen? Why, he set *his* life afore hers! That he might live he left her to die! Why, she was well quit of such a father! Take her from me, Jasper Combe, if thou'st the heart to do it—but do it wi' a shut mouth; for God knows, with all my sins—and they're many—I done my duty by her!

Jas. Dan'l, I spake harshly—I am sorry for it. You are right. That she was not my own child, but a step-child, matters nothing. I loved her mother dearly. It was my duty to protect the child, and I basely forsook my trust. But for this misdeed I have suffered bitterly. It killed her poor mother, who loved her beyond measure, and on her deathbed I swore to search out the child that I might make amends—and now that after many years of weary searching I have found her, shall I yield her up, even to you? Come, Dan'l, be just, and ask yourself this.

Dan. I have nowt to say agin it, sir. It's right—but it's ower hard—it's ower hard! (*Calls.*) Dorothy, my child, come hither.

Enter DOROTHY.

(*To* SIR JASPER.) I ask your pardon, sir, if I call her my child still, for she's bin more than that to me! (*To* DOROTHY.) Dolly, my lass, there's a change in store for thee—a grand change; thou'rt a lady, ay, a great lady, too. I allers knowed

thou wast a lady. (*To* SIR JASPER.) She doan't talk like us common folk, sir! This gentleman, Sir Jasper Combe—he's come to claim thee—he's thy father, Dolly—think o' that! And he's—he's goin' to take thee from me—only to Combe-Raven, Dolly, where I'll come and see thee often. (*To* SIR JASPER.) Thou'lt let me come and see her odd times? (*To* DOROTHY.) And thou'lt come and see me, and there'll be grand doins then, eh, Dolly? There, there, go to thy father—he'll be a kind father to thee, and he'll love thee well, never doubt it—and—and I shall love thee too, and thou'lt have two fathers 'stead o' one, Dolly, that's all! (*She is about to speak.*) Doan't speak! doan't speak; for God's sake, doan't speak! (*He rushes out.* DOROTHY *stands dumb with surprise.*)

Jas. Dorothy, my child, I am indeed he who should stand to thee in the place of a father. I know that I seem to thee to be doing a hard thing—for thou hast learnt to love him, and he hath earned thy love. But, Dorothy, I am childless and alone, wealthy, honoured, and of good repute, yet alone in my old age. Dorothy, come to me—come to me!

Dor. (*who has been sobbing through this speech*). Oh, sir, forgive me if I seem to speak thoughtlessly, for I am but a poor untaught girl, and I know not how to reply. He has been so good to me, and I love him with all the love of my heart. Oh, sir, it cannot be that after these long years of tender love I am to be taken from him now. Oh, it will kill him! Have pity on him, sir, for it will kill him! I cannot leave him now. I am the very light of his eyes—the very heart of his life (*sobbing*)—I cannot leave him now! Oh, sir, if thou hast no care for him, yet for the love of my mother have pity upon me!

Jas. (*after a pause*). I had thought my atonement was at an end, but my bitterest punishment is yet to come, and I am to suffer it at thy hands. So be it—it is just! Dorothy, my child, whom I have sought so long, I will not break another heart. Thou art free to go to him who has been more to thee than many fathers.

Dor. Heaven bless thee for those good words; they have sown seed in my heart that will bear thee truer love than could have come in many years passed away from him! Sir, thou hast spared his life. When his wife left him it drove him to the very verge of madness, and this last blow would have ended his life!

Jas. Did his wife leave him?

Dor. Alas! yes, many years since—before I was sent to him.

Jas. And he loved her very dearly too?

Dor. So dearly that he would have taken her to his heart if she had returned to him—so dearly that he called me Dorothy because he read her name in mine eyes.

Jas. Dorothy! was that her name?

Dor. Ay, Dorothy Marple, for that is rightly my father's name. But to save her good fame he gave out that he was dead, and he took the name he now bears.

Jas. (*aside*). My sin has borne bitter fruit! Oh, Dan'l Druce, give me thy pardon! Dorothy, for the sake of the Dorothy who is dead, give me thy pardon!

Enter DAN'L DRUCE.

Master Druce, Heaven has interposed to save me from unwittingly working on thee a deep and bitter injury. Take the child that is thine own in the eye of God and of man. As she has been thy daughter hitherto, so shall she be thy daughter to the end!

Dan. (*amazed*). Why, sir—Dorothy, my child—is he not goin' to take thee from me?

Jas. I have no right with her. She is thine, to bless thine old age, and to bring thee comfort to the very last.

Dan. Dorothy—my child—my child! (*Takes* DOROTHY *in his arms.*) Oh, sir, I know not how to bless thee for this blessing!

Jas. Give me no blessing. I have done thee a wrong that is beyond the power of man to repair. Think of the deepest injury that man's wickedness has ever wrought on thee, and place it to my account. (DAN'L *thunderstruck.*) If it lies within thee to extend the hand of pardon to him who laid waste thine home and made thy life desolate, read in my blighted life the punishment that the sin of my youth has brought upon me in my old age. As I have sinned, so before Heaven I have atoned! [*Exit* SIR JASPER.

Dan. (*as* SIR JASPER'S *meaning breaks upon him*). Stay! come back—if this be not a devil-born dream, come back and hear me out. Oh, source of all the sorrow I have known! Oh, black and bitter curse of two poor lives! Thy life for hers—thy cursed life for hers!

Dor. Father, spare him—be merciful—be just. He is an old man now—thou art an old man—is it in the winter of your lives that the heart-burnings of hot youth are to be avenged? He has wronged thee, but he has suffered and will yet suffer. As I have prevailed to turn thee to mankind, so let me, thy

daughter—thy daughter indeed—thine own flesh—*her* own flesh—prevail against this one surviving sorrow. Spare him and pardon him—for her sake and for mine! (*Kneels.*)

Enter GEOFFREY.

Dan. Oh, Dorothy, dead and in heaven, when God took thee He left an angel behind to plead for thee and for this man! It is Heaven's voice—my anger has gone out of me!

Geof. Dorothy, wilt thou believe now that it was for thy sake and for thy father's that I did deceive thee? (DOROTHY *rises;* DAN'L *sits.*) Wilt thou believe, now, that I love thee truly and beyond all on earth?

Dor. Oh, Geoffrey! forgive me—forgive me! I acted in haste! I knew not what I did! (*Embracing him.*)

Geof. My darling! (*Kisses her.*)

Dor. Art thou happy, Geoffrey?

Geof. Passing happy! And thou

Dor. Passing happy!

GRETCHEN.

A PLAY,

IN FOUR ACTS.

First produced at the Olympic Theatre, on March 24th, 1879.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DOMINIC.

ANSELM.

FAUSTUS.

GOTTFRIED.

MEPHISTO.

AGATHA.

BESSIE.

BARBARA.

LISA.

GRETCHEN.

MARTHA.

FRIEDRICH.

NOTE.—The leading idea of this play was suggested by Goethe's "Faust." The author is indebted to that work for the scene between Mephisto and Martha in Act II. In every other respect the dialogue is original.

GRETCHEN.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Under the cloisters of a monastery. In the centre of the stage a graveyard; in the graveyard, conspicuous among other tombs, is a tall monument. Procession of* Monks *crosses the stage at back. Moonlight.*

DOMINIC *discovered seated, reading. To him enters* ANSELM.

Dom. Pax vobiscum, father!
Ans. *Benedicite!*
I am rejoiced that, after many perils
By sea and land, I am once more among you.
How fares our poor sick Faustus?
Dom. By Heaven's grace,
He is, in body, well—yet much I fear
There lies some hidden canker at his soul.
When he was prostrate on a fevered bed,
The utterings of his delirium
Were rather those of some base man of sin,
Than of a holy father, vowed to heaven.
Ans. Thy news is grave indeed; but knowest thou this
Of thine own knowledge?
Dom. Ay, in truth I do.
I took my turn with others at his bed,
And all who watched him made the same report.
When the delirium was at its worst
His fevered brain was filled with worldly dreams,
And seemed to revel in the guilty joys
That he for once and all had long forsworn.
Now at a gaming table, flushed with wine,
And swearing roundly that the dice were loaded;
Now at a drunken revel, trolling forth

Ungodly songs that set mine ears ablaze;
Now at the chase; now breathing words of love
Into the ears of some fair wanton; then
Invoking curses on her wantonness!
Ans. But spake he never of the holy life
That he is sworn to lead?
Dom. Nay, never once,
Unless it were to curse the evil haste
That led him to it.
Ans. It affects me much
To hear these tidings of our well-loved Faustus.
I knew that, ere he took his holy vows,
He led a life of sin, and for that cause
I more rejoiced his heart had turned to grace.
But, see, he comes. Leave me alone with him.
I'll speak to him as father speaks to son.
Dom. May Heaven speed thy work. [*Exit* DOMINIC.

Enter FAUSTUS.

Ans. Come hither, son.
The kindly brothers who attended thee
In thy delirium have no light cause
To think that, though thy priestly ministries
Are to the letter faithfully performed,
Thy heart is bent on worldly matters still.
Faus. Of what do they complain? Can any say
That I have failed in my observances?
That I have spoken ill of any man?
That I live not a chaste and sober life?
That I am loth to pray with dead and dying?
Are not my priestly duties well discharged?
Ans. Would that all priests within these sacred walls
Took thee for an ensample in these matters.
But who can read the inmost heart of man?
The lips may move in prayer, and but the lips.
Speak to me frankly—tell me by what means
Thou wast induced to quit the world without,
Its fleeting pleasures and its lasting pains,
For the pure calm of these monastic shades?
Faus. Oh, father, holy father, bear with me,
My heart is very sore!
Ans. Come—tell me all,
Fear nothing; speak to me as to thyself.

Faus. How shall I speak to such a one as thou
Of an intense and all-believing love,
Betrayed, abandoned, trampled underfoot?
Of pure and simple faith in one fair woman—
Unswerving faith—faith, absolute and whole—
And of the deadly agony that came
Of finding that well-trusted woman false?
All the more false for the divine truth-promise
That played upon her fair and placid brow;
All the more false for the hot passion-vows
That leaped, in hurried whispers, from her lips!
I gave her all the wealth of my rich heart—
I lived upon her love—I fed my life
With the sweet poison of her lying lips
In utter trust. God help me!—one dark day,
In the high noon of all my happiness,
My heart upraised to heaven, in gratitude
For the fair promise of our coming life,
She left me, for a man whose proffered love
Had formed the theme of many an idle jest.
But he was rich—and so—she went to him!
At once the open volume of her life
Lay plain before me, and I read therein,
That she was—womankind!
Mad with the frenzy of a shipwrecked heart,
And with the old fond test-words of our love
Ringing a mocking echo through my brain,
I cursed the world and all the women in it,
And here sought sanctuary.

Ans. Ah, my son,
This haven from the tempests of the world
Should not be sought in bitterness of soul.
Only the pious heart, turned heavenwards
From very love of heaven, will here find rest,
Till Heaven, in its good time, shall garner it.
But take good heart. I'll talk with thee to-night,
And, with the help of Heaven, give thee good counsel.
Be comforted—the world without is hollow,
As thou, in thine hot wrath, didst reckon it.
Thy wrath had reason in't. Be comforted!

[*Exit* ANSELM.

Faus. "Only the pious heart, turned heavenwards
From very love of heaven!" Fit formula
To typify the fierce, embittered cynic,

Who, in heart-misery, sought refuge here,
As a poor, worried, over-hunted fox,
Cursing his persecutors, runs to earth
To lick his bleeding flanks in sulky peace,
And brood, in solitude, on men and dogs!
No hope! no hope! no hope! For life entombed—
For life cut off from life—a breathing man,
Wrapped in a winding-sheet of his own weaving!
A living heart, inurned and sepulchred!

Enter GOTTFRIED, *disguised as a monk.*

Gott. Good brother, *pax vobiscum.*
Faus. *Benedicite!*
Gott. Art thou the monk who, in the world without,
Was known as Faustus?
Faus. Ay, the very same.
Gott. I am a travelling Dominican
Sent to thee by the Prior of our Order;
Who, having heard much scandalous report
Of thy most heinous immoralities,
Instructs me, with all friendly privacy,
To urge thee to amend thy naughty life.
Or, if thou findest this impossible
(As there is reason to believe thou mayst),
So to conceal and cloke thy wanton ways,
That thou, at least, mayst seem to be a saint,
And so afford no handle to the grasp
Of the all-watchful enemies of our Church.
Faus. Strange mission, strangely worded, holy brother!
What doth your Prior allege? And by what right
Dares he to counsel such hypocrisy?
Whence comes his information?
Gott. From Sir Gottfried,
A very blameless, pure, and godly knight;
Who, once a boon companion of thy follies,
Hath since repented, and indicted thee
For that, despite thy vows of continence,
Thou livest the old life.
Faus. Now, by the Truth,
Never lied Gottfried thus!
Gott. Nay, by the Truth,
I speak his very words—and here's the proof!
[*Throws off his robe, and appears as a young soldier.*

Faus. Gottfried! Is this indeed my dear old friend?
Gott. The same indeed. Bound for the wars again!
My troop of horse is passing through the town,
And hearing that thou wast within these walls,
I asked for thee. A bearded brother came,
And with scant courtesy, he bade me wait
Thy leisure in the great refectory.
There, much perplexed to know with what address
I might most ceremoniously greet
So eminent a theologian,
I saw this rag-bag hanging on a peg—
Thou knowest the rest.
Faus. I am rejoiced to see thee,
Despite thy ill-timed jest.
Gott. And this Faustus!
The old dare-devil Faustus! Marvellous!
When last I saw thee, thou wast bravely clad
In coat of cramoisie, and by thy side
There swung the readiest rapier in the town!
Faus. Hush, hush, these vanities are past and gone,
And many others with them!
Gott. By-the-by,
There was a black-eyed wench—a plump brown rogue,
With full red lips, and twinkling ankles, too—
Dost recollect her ankles? No? *I* do!
Let's see—her name. What was the wench's name?
Has she gone with the other vanities?
Faus. I prithee stop thy tongue. I loved the girl
And she was false to me. My heart died out.
I sickened of the world and woman's love,
And here sought refuge.
Gott. Oh, for shame! for shame!
To hold the world to be a hollow world
Because one heart has proved a hollow heart!
Now hear a parable. But ten days since,
A swindling huckster gave me a bad ducat;
Now, by my head, I thought that ducat good:
It seemed so fair and bright—and as it lay
Upon my open palm, I read thereon
A pious legend, drawn from Holy Writ!
Believing that a ducat, wreathed about
With such a goodly warrant, could not lie,
I loved that ducat, and I trusted it!
Well, well, the ducat proved to be but base.

With a deep sigh—for gold is scarce with me—
I cast that ducat from me. But did I,
On that account, forswear *all* ducats? No!
My love for ducats—and my need of them—
Are just as keen as ever!
Faus. Peace, old friend.
I am a priest, who once forswore the world
Because he thought all women false. Think you
That being priest, and sitting day by day
In yon confessional,
I have seen cause to hold my judgment cheap?
Gott. Plague on thy judgments! Judgments ready-made
Are counterparts of garments ready-made,
That fit some well, some ill, some not at all.
I know a maiden, scarce eighteen years old,
Fair as the apple-green of early dawn,
Pure as the summer sun of southern heaven;
A psalm incarnate—an embodied prayer,
Not of the earth, yet dwelling thereupon;
Nor yet of heaven—although her mission be
To teach mankind that heaven is worth the winning.
I have seen sturdy brawlers sheath their blades
To humbly doff their hats at her approach;
And when she's fairly out of hearing, then
Draw a long breath and go their ways in peace,
As though the air were charged with loving-kindness.
Rude gallants, in whose eyes all womankind
Are but the subjects of licentious jest,
Stand back abashed as Gretchen passes by,
And hush their converse into decency.
Young wanton girls weep tears of honest shame,
And old men think of angels and the heaven
That is to crown their closing pilgrimage!
Faus. (*interested*). Who is this maiden?
Gott. My dead uncle's child,
An orphan, dwelling twenty leagues away.
Faus. Thou lovest her?
Gott. Ay, as I love the truth—
As I love purity and innocence—
As I love heaven and the good life to come!
Faus. Well, well—go on—she is thy kinswoman.
Thou hast a goodly presence—and I know
Thy heart is honest. Thou hast told thy love?

Gott. I, dare to speak of love to Gretchen? No!
I'm a rough soldier—barrack-born and bred.
My life's a tavern life—my closest friends
Are all rough soldiers; and the air I breathe
Reeks with unholy jests and fumes of wine!
I, dare to speak of love to Gretchen? Why,
My tongue would shrivel at the blasphemy!
Faus. Why, what's all this?
Thou'rt going from her, and thou dost not dare
To tell her of thy love? She is the pearl
Of maidenhood, and yet thy heart is faint
Because she is the pearl of maidenhood?
Up, man! Take heart of grace! Thy love is honest,
Thy face is fair—thine heart is true and sound—
Thou art a soldier, marked for fair reward.
Up, man! Take heart of grace! No fretting vows
Stand betwixt *thee* and such an earthly heaven!
To think that this most miserable man
Has all this boundless treasure in his reach,
And hesitates to grasp it! Up, faint heart!
Come, boot and saddle, and away with thee,
Ere some more daring and less worthy suitor
Step in to take her from thee!
Gott. (*astonished*). By my hand,
'Twas Faustus spake then—not the holy friar!
Faus. I spake as man to man—as friend to friend.
I love thee; and if such a woman live
As thou hast pictured, take her to thine heart
While yet thou mayst. Had I loved such a one
I should not now be wearing out my life
In these sad solitudes!
Gott. (*sadly*). There spake the heart,
And not the lips.
Faus. (*recollecting himself*). May Heaven pardon me!
I knew not what I said!
Gott. My dear old friend!
Come, I must say farewell, my troop awaits me.
We ride through Lutzen. I shall see her there. (*Trumpet heard without.*)
"To horse!" Dost know the sound?
Faus. (*sighing*). I know it well!
Gott. I'll warrant me thy trusty soldier-heart
Bounds as of old, despite thy monkish frock,
At the old trumpet call!

Faus. These things are past!
May God protect thee in thine enterprise,
And give thee safe and speedy conduct home.
Gott. Amen to that. So, Faustus, fare thee well!
[*Exit* GOTTFRIED.
Faus. He's gone! gone forth to the fair, fruitful world:
The world of life and love, the world of hope,
Of open hearts and unchecked sympathies!
Oh, foolish priest, misleading and misled,
Poor trickster, ever duping, ever duped—
Cheating thyself into a mad surrender
Of all that youth holds dearest: cheating others
Into blind trust of thy sincerity!
Thou art a man—the world was made for men!
Thou hast a heart—thy heart is idle here!
A curse on all this maddening mummery,
This life-long lie, this living catacomb!
Earth, heaven, hell, whichever hears me now,
Come to my call, and bring me back to life!
[*Thunder, lightning;* MEPHISTO *appears.*
Faus. Merciful Heaven, defend me! Who art thou?
What dost thou here, and what wouldst thou with me?
Meph. You called me, and I came in hurried haste,
Lest the two other powers whom you invoked
Should be before me in the race.
Faus. Who art thou?
Meph. A travelling clock-cobbler, who repairs
The moral timepiece when it's out of order.
Faus. A truce to riddles.
Meph. Then I'll speak more plainly
Some clocks are well made, some are roughly fashioned,
And need much tinkering; springs weaken, snap,
Wheels loosen, dust gets in, and time is lost;
Men lose all faith, and put the liar by
As something worse than useless. I, clock-cobbler,
Wind up the moral timepiece, make new faces,
Repair this wheel, that spring, mend here, mend there;
In short, I do my very best to make
A timepiece that has lost its character
Pass for a trusty herald of the hour.
Faus. Get thee behind me, for I know thee now,
Despite thy fair disguise!
Meph. Oh, pardon me,
I've no disguise. This is my own fair form.

I'm not the horrible embodiment
You doctors of the Church have painted me—
A very Satyr, with a dragon's tail—
A nursemaid's devil! Oh, shortsighted priests,
My policy is to allure mankind,
Not to repel them!
Faus. What wouldst thou with me?
Meph. A proper question! Why, you summoned me!
It is a leading principle with me
That no one ever needs to call me twice.
Faus. I spake in haste. I did not weigh my words.
Meph. That may be, or it may not be. I have
A character for promptness to maintain,
And can't afford to risk my reputation
On the mere hazard that your words were idle.
Faus. You've saved your character, and so depart—
Prime cause of sin—accursed of God and man!
Meph. Unjust—illogical! But you're a Churchman.
Prime cause of sin! Why, evil comes from good,
As oft as good from evil. Motives? Pooh!
Why, half the ills that vex mankind arise
From motives that are unimpeachable.
Faus. If goodly seed, well sown, bear evil fruit,
The fault is scarcely with the husbandman.
Meph. But why sow any goodly seed at all,
If evil may result from doing so?
Faus. Why try to stop my sowing goodly seed,
If it produce the crops that please you best?
Meph. He's hit the blot! This clear-cut brain of his
Is wasted in this world of half an acre!
Cast off thy frock—come forth with me. The man
Who can detect my sophisms at a glance
Is safe enough, without the galling chains
That fetter him to prayer and solitude.
Come forth with me;
There's a fair field without these gloomy walls
For such a brain as thine—a merry world,
Teeming with song and dance—a grateful world,
Where gallant deed and brilliant enterprise
Meet with their due reward—a loving world,
Where kindred hearts may chime in unison.
Come forth with me!
Faus. Peace—get thee hence away.
My vows are taken!

Meph. Ay, and so they are!
Vows not to dream of the gay world without—
Vows not to sigh for temporal vanities—
Vows so to chasten, quell, and mortify
Your natural craving for a woman's love,
That it shall sicken, wither, starve and die
From lack of sustenance!
Rare vows, and rarely kept, I make no doubt!
Why, man, you break them every day you live;
You break them when you weep upon the grave
Of broken hopes and blighted sympathies—
Of wrecked ambitions, and the hundred tombs
That crowd this solitary sepulchre!
You break them when you let your memory loose
To revel in the rich, ripe luxury
Of luscious lips, soft cheeks and glancing eyes,
The violet breath—the press of warm, soft hands,
Or the crisp frettle of disordered hair,
That wooed your flaming cheek, as, half ashamed,
The maiden nestled, blushing, on your breast—
And yet you plead your vows! Like some I know
Who pray for mankind in the aggregate,
And damn them all in detail!

Faus. Tempt me not.
I left the world of women for these walls,
Because I found a woman false as thou—
I'll not return.

Meph. Illogical again.
"As one is so are all." Sound argument!
You gather generals from particulars
Like all your brood. Why, there's no harm in women.
I didn't make them! They're my deadliest foes!
Why, he who of his own unfettered will
Cuts himself off from pure communion
With blameless womanhood, withdraws himself
From a far holier influence than he finds
Within these sad and silent solitudes.

Faus. Strange sentiments from such as thou!

Meph. For that
We devils, as you Churchmen please to call us,
Are not the simple folk you take us for;
We are shrewd fellows in our homely way,
And look facts in the face. I know a maid,
A fair and gentle girl—the pink and bloom

Of all that's loveliest in maidenhood,
Whose simple truth and pure and blameless life
Have done my cause more harm in eighteen years
Than all the monks in Christendom can mend!

Faus. Is this indeed the truth?

Meph. Ay, though I tell it.

Faus. If there live such a one as thou hast painted—
A maiden—pure as the blue breath of heaven,
Into whose virgin heart no dream of ill
Hath ever crept—the bloom of whose pure lips
Is yet unbrushed by man's polluting touch;
Whose life is open as the very truth—
A perfect type of blameless maidenhood,
Take me to her, and I *will* learn of her.

Meph. Humph! No, I'd rather not.

Faus. And why?

Meph. You see,
We devils have our consciences. In vice
We can do nearly all that man can do,
But not quite all. There are some forms of sin
From which we shrink—and this is one of them.
I have no stomach for such worldly work.
Best get a man to help you.

Faus. Mocking fiend,
Misjudge me not. As there's a heaven and hell,
I mean the maid no wrong. I'll take thy help,
If thou wilt give it me. But be forewarned;
I'll make no compact with thee. Set me free,
And I will fight thee with the holy aid
Of her pure innocence. Be thou forewarned.

Meph. I like your frankness! Well, you're not the first
Who's tried to rise to heaven on my shoulders!
Humph! I don't know. I am a match for *you*.
But, you and she allied! The odds are heavy!
Well, I'm a student still, and always glad
To glean experience when and how I can.
I'm curious to see how this will end;
If *for* me—good; but if against me—well,
I shall but lose *you*, and you're no great stake.
And so I'll risk it. See! The maiden comes!

[*A vision of* GRETCHEN *is seen, gliding across the stage, through the tombstones; she is reading a breviary.*

Faus. *(entranced).* Great grace of Heaven!

Is this indeed a form of mortal mould?
Speak, tempter, speak!
Meph. Ay, flesh and blood, like yours,
Taken, haphazard, from a world of women!
How say you? Is she not exceeding fair?
Is there not innocence in every line
Of that pure face? Is aught more virginal
Than the sweet sadness of those downcast eyes
Bent on her breviary? And yet withal,
There is a wondrous world of latent love
Within that maiden heart. The girl will love
As few can love, when the full time arrives;
So take good heed, deal gently with the maid,
Or harm may come of it—and that were pity!
Faus. If there be truth in heaven, there's truth in her!
If there be heaven on earth, there's heaven here!
Meph. Ay, verily! Why, when I look on her,
I'm almost tempted to turn saint myself;
What would the world do then! Well, what say you?
The choice is well before you. On one hand,
Quibbling chop-logic—lip and letter worship—
Flesh idly mortified—unreasoning dogma—
The shallow sophistries of means and end—
Straws split, and split, and split, and split again—
Each section in itself infallible,
And all dissentients damned! And on the other,
Peace, charity, and mercy, simple faith,
Gentle good-will and loving kindliness.
Come, priest, what say you? Quick—my time is short.
[*The apparition raises her eyes from her book and turns to* FAUSTUS, *holding out her hand to him.*
Faus. Spirit of peace—divine embodiment—
Henceforth be thou my faith—be thou my Church!
Be thou my guide, my hope, my monitress!
Henceforth the beacon-light of thy pure soul
Shall shed its light upon my onward path,
And I will follow whither it may lead!
Spirit of purity, I come to thee!

ACT II.

SCENE.—*A glade. On the right a precipitous descent through the stage at the back; on the left an avenue of trees.*

BARBARA, BESSIE, *and others discovered; to them enters* AGATHA.

Aga. Oh, Bessie—Barbara! Such dreadful news!
Bess. News!
Bar. Quick! What is it?
Aga. Lisa has returned!
Lisa, who ran away with the rich merchant
A year ago!
Bar. A wicked, wicked girl!
I hope she won't come here!
Bess. And have you seen her?
Aga. I met her only half an hour ago
Upon the Leipzic road!
Bess. Is she much changed?
Aga. Changed! Why, at first I couldn't trust my eyes.
You know how jauntily she bore herself—
How daintily she dressed? Well—*that's* all changed!
Pale, wasted to a shadow—draggletailed—
Dressed in torn rags—bare-footed, and bare-headed!
A beggar!
Bar. I remember how she sneered
At my blue gown trimmed with peach-coloured ribbon
Well, Heaven has punished her for *that.*
Bess. But say—
Did she address you?
Aga. Yes, she spoke my name.
I started, and I recognized her. Well,
I mumbled forth some words—I scarce know what—
And, all a-fluster, gathered up my skirts,
And ran as though a ghost were at my heels.
Bar. And you did wisely. Honest working girls
Should shun such brazen creatures!
Bess. Soft—she's here!

[LISA *comes down avenue; she is dressed in torn and travel-stained rags, as described. As she comes down the girls turn away from her.*

Lisa. Well, girls,
Do you not know me, that you turn from me?
Or has the misery of twelve black months
So sadly changed me?
Bess. (*sighing*). Yes, we know you well!
Bar. (*spitefully*). Too well!
Lisa. Is there no pity for me in your hearts?
Is there no pardon for such sin as mine?
See—I am cold and hungry—travel-worn—
Broken in spirit, humbled and forsaken.
Oh, I have paid a penalty!
Bar. No doubt.
We knew you would.
Bess. (*aside to* BARBARA). I'm sorry for the girl;
We've known her all our lives. With all her faults,
We loved her well, when she was one of us.
Bar. When she was one of us? Of course—because
She then *was* one of us. But when a man—
A married man—elopes with one of us
(Which happens sometimes), why, that one of us
No longer claims to rank as one of us;
And so the cause of love exists no longer.
Aga. That's true, indeed!
Lisa. Have you no charity?
Is there no eloquence to touch your hearts
In this wan, wasted form—these wretched rags?
Why, look at me!
Bar. There is a certain frock,
Blue, trimmed with peach—not much the worse for wear—
That's humbly at your service. (*Curtsying mockingly.*)
Bess. Spare her, pray!
Lisa. Ay, spare me, bitter hearts! Who can foresee?
A year ago, I was as one of you!
Another year, and you may be as I!
So, better spare me, lest it come to pass
That you have judged yourselves in judging me.
Well, well, the river's near!

Enter GRETCHEN.

Gret. Why, who is this?
Lisa! (*Taking her hand.*)
Lisa. Hold! Ere you take my hand in yours,
Remember what I am and what I've done.

I am an outcast, cheated and betrayed.
He swore to marry me—well, I believed him,
And when I looked to him to keep his promise,
He told me of his wife. There, that's my story.
Go wash your hand!

Gret. Poor bruised and broken heart—
Be comforted. Why, I have prayed and prayed
For thy return—and see, my prayer is heard!
Poor wanderer! Our hearts were sore for thee,
Ay, very sore—and I remember well
How Barbara wept when the sad tidings came,
And vowed she'd rather lose her best ten years
Than this had happened.

Bar. Yes, and so I would,
But it *has* happened—and the mischief's done.

Bess. (*crying*). I'm sure I loved her dearly!

Aga. So did I!
One can't forget old times!

Gret. Why, then be brave,
And prove that thine was no fine-weather love,
Poor penitent! Oh, sisters, is it fit
That we should judge our sister, or withhold
The mercy that we pray for, day by day?

Lisa (*surprised*). Oh, Gretchen, Gretchen!

Gret. Come, poor broken heart,
Look up—we are thy sisters as of old.

Bess. (*half sobbing*). If Gretchen can forgive thee, who are we
That we should hold aloof? We spake in haste;
Our hearts were turned to thee, despite our words.

[*Bessie kisses her and exit.*

Bar. You told me once that I'd a bitter tongue,
D'ye recollect it? Lisa, you were right.
Forgive me, please; there! (*Kissing her.*) Never mind the frock,
Though bear in mind (*to* AGATHA) I still maintain my point,
That blue and peach go very well together!

[*Exeunt* BARBARA *and* AGATHA.

Gret. Come, dry your eyes, and take good heart again.

Lisa. Oh, Gretchen, Gretchen! let me weep awhile:
In truth I looked for pity and for help
From them, for they and I had much in common;
But thou, so good in all, so pure, so true——

Gret. If it be good and true to close one's heart
To sorrow such as thine, why, Heaven help me,
For then I have no title to the words!
See, Martha comes. She has an angry tongue,
Although her heart is kindly. Get thee hence
Till I have spoken to her. Here is money;
Go, get thee food, and then come back to me.
Take courage—Martha can refuse me nothing.
It shall go hard but when thou comest back
She'll welcome thee as I do. Fare thee well.

Lisa. Those who would pray for thee have but one prayer,
That earth be kind to thee, for heaven is thine,
Ay, surely, surely thine. [*Exit.*

Enter MARTHA, *with basket.*

Mar. Drudge, drudge, drudge, drudge! To market seven miles,
And seven home again! It's a hard life,
And tells upon me sorely! All this comes
Of marrying a bad man—a bad, poor man.
But there, he's at the wars—God keep him there!
Ah, Gretchen, Gretchen, be advised by me;
And promise me that when thy heart's in danger,
Thou'lt come to me, that I may counsel thee
Out of the wealth of my experience—
The only wealth I have. Come, promise me.

Gret. I do. (*Pauses; then timidly*) In proof of my sincerity
I will begin to-day. I *have* seen one
Whom I could love.

Mar. (*amazed*). Why, Gretchen, what's all this?
Doth he love thee?

Gret. Ay, for he told me so.

Mar. He told thee so! And when?

Gret. Last night.

Mar. Last night!

Gret. Or stay—it might have been betimes this morning.

Mar. Last night! This morning! Gretchen! Where wast thou
Last night—this morning?

Gret. Why, within thy house.

Mar. And there thy lover saw thee—spake to thee,

Within my house—alone—at dead of night!
Gretchen, for shame! Art thou as other girls?
Who is the reprobate?
Gret. I cannot say.
I do not think he is a reprobate.
Mar. His name?
Gret. I do not know.
Mar. His rank—his calling?
Gret. I cannot tell.
Mar. Why, Gretchen, I'm aghast!
Gret. Nay, I'll not plague thee with half-hidden truths,
I'll tell thee all, and thou shalt counsel me.
Last night I slept—it might have been this morning,
I cannot tell—and, as I slept, methought
That as I wandered all alone, amid
The moonlight tombs of some old cloistered square,
I saw a man, arrayed in monkish frock,
And yet (so much at variance with themselves
Are sleeping fantasies) he was no monk,
But some young errant knight of noble rank,
The very flower of gentle chivalry!
Entranced, I gazed upon him, marvelling much
That aught of mortal mould could be so fair;
('Twas but a dream—we cannot frame our dreams)
And as I gazed, methought he knelt him down,
And vowed himself to me, for evermore!
There—read me that!
Mar. I will. Now, mark my words,
The lover whom thou seest in a dream
Will, in due season, court thee—in a dream.
And, if the courtship prosper, as it will,
Some day, perhaps, he'll wed thee—in a dream.
Then after many long and life-like dreams
Of married misery, black looks, rough words,
Hard blows and mutual discontent, thou'lt wake
And bless thy lucky stars it *was* a dream!
Dream on, my child, pray thou mayst never wake,
As I have done. Come, there is work to do.
[*Exeunt together.*

Enter FAUSTUS *and* MEPHISTO.

Faus. At last, at last—unless my heart deceives me,
Here is the glade, and that should be her house.

Meph. Ay, that's the house that holds the guardian maid
Who is to lead you whither you should go,
And save your lordship from yourself—and me.
Henceforth that hovel is to be your church,
With savoury fumes of roast and boiled for incense;
The dim recesses of the chimney corner
Will serve you as a snug confessional.
How say you? Will you enter? If you do,
You'll find the fair high priestess of the shrine
Intent upon the secular employ
Of hanging clothes to dry. Or will you wait
Until my pretty enemy is free
To enter on her spiritual functions?

Faus. Peace! mocking spirit. Stay thy ribald tongue.
Dost thou, whom none believe, believe in none?

Meph. Nay, I'm the most confiding soul alive.
I credit all I'm told. Not by the tongue—
Men do not speak to me with tongues. No, no.
Man keeps his words and deeds for man's behoof.
They speak a language that I cannot fathom.
I read the heart and brain, and all *they* tell me,
With childlike faith, I readily accept.

Faus. I would my heart were as an open book,
That all might read therein! But who comes here?
By all the powers that rule mischance, 'tis Gottfried!
What shall I do? How justify myself
In my old comrade's eyes?

Meph. Leave that to me.
Bear yourself boldly; put a good face on't,
And I will frame excuses that will serve.

Enter GOTTFRIED.

Gott. Here is the well-loved home! Ah, Gretchen, Gretchen!
When shall we meet again? Or shall we meet?
God knows! I go where death is freely dealt,
And I may fall—— Well, she will weep for me. (*Sees* FAUSTUS.)
Whom have we here? Either my senses cheat me,
Or this is Faustus! Faustus, as I live!
Faustus unfrocked! Faustus unsanctified!
Faustus re-butterflied in bravery!

Faus. Ay, Gottfried, I am Faustus—in the flesh.

Gott. Now here's a riddle, and I wait the answer.
But yesterday thou wast a hooded monk,
A pale, cold, stern, and sour Dominican;
A human tombstone, sculptured by thyself,
In honour of thy dead and buried follies.
To-day I find the tombstone taken down,
And all the follies risen from the dead!
Meph. He was misled—his follies cheated him.
Believing they were dead, to all intent,
In decency he raised a monument;
But finding them alive beneath his gown,
In decency he took the tombstone down.
Gott. It is enough for me that thou art free.
Welcome once more to life and liberty!
(*To* MEPHISTO.) Sir, in the name of all good fellowship,
I thank you for your charitable office.
Faus. Now tell me, Gottfried, wherefore art thou here?
Gott. I come, as yesterday I said I should,
To bid a long farewell to cousin Gretchen.
Faus. To Gretchen?
Gott. Ay, the maid of whom I spake.
Faus. Is *her* name Gretchen?
Gott. Yes—she lives hard by,
With Mistress Martha. Faustus, thou shalt see her,
And join with me in worship at her shrine.
Faus. (*confused*). I understand—my words have weighed with thee,
And thou hast come to tell her of thy love.
Gott. Not I, indeed; despite thine eloquence,
I'm going from her for a weary while,
Maybe for ever. That will give her sorrow,
Sorrow enough. I would not add to it
By telling her of such poor love as mine
For all the world holds dear. Some day, please Heaven,
I shall return with honours to my name
(If honours lie within my grasp, I'll grasp them),
And then, if I've a name worth offering,
Maybe I'll pluck up heart. Not now, not now.
But hush, she comes.

Enter GRETCHEN.

Gretchen, my sister Gretchen!

Gret. Gottfried! I am right glad to welcome thee,
My dear, dear brother! Art thou come for long?
Gott. Nay, Gretchen, I am with my troop of horse.
We march to Dettingen, and being here
I stole a brief half hour to say farewell.
Gret. (*alarmed*). Thou art not going to the war?
Gott. No, no!
Mere frontier duty, Gretchen; nothing more.
(*Aside.*) May Heaven forgive me—that's a downright lie!
Gret. I breathe again. (*Sees* FAUSTUS.) Who is this gentleman? (*With intense surprise.*)
Gott. This is my very dear and tried friend, Faustus,
The truest fellow that the wide world holds.
Faustus, this is my gentle cousin Gretchen.
Gret. (*agitated*). Surely I dream again! Oh, marvellous!
The very face and form!
Gott. Come, Gretchen, speak.
Gret. (*much agitated*). I give you honest welcome, noble sir;
As you are Gottfried's friend, so are you ours.
Faus. I thank you, lady.
Gott. Well, and is that all?
"I thank you, lady!" Come, thou shamefaced knight,
Where are thy words? Gretchen, be not deceived—
He *hath* a tongue—a very fluent tongue,
And one that serves him well, when he so pleases.
Faus. I am not dumb from lack of gratitude.
Much as I owe to Gottfried's well-tried love,
My heavy debt is multiplied tenfold.
Gott. (*aside to* FAUSTUS). Then, debtor, pay the tenfold debt tenfold.
Watch over her when I am far away—
Shield her from harm as though she were thy sister,
And we'll cry quits. Thou wilt? I thank thee, Faustus;
I go with lighter heart! (*Aloud to* GRETCHEN.) Now, fare thee well.
God keep thee safe and sound till I return.
Gret. Farewell, dear Gottfried—think of me at times.
My heart is full—then read it in my eyes.
May Heaven shield thee from all harm!
Gott. Amen.
And now to horse—nay, not another word,

Or I shall lack the heart to go at all.
Farewell—once more and only once—farewell!
[*Exit* GOTTFRIED.
Gret. (*timidly*). Sir, will you enter? Our poor home is near,
And Mistress Martha will be glad to greet you.
You are an old friend of my cousin Gottfried?
Faus. Ay, lady.
Gret. Nay, you must not call me "lady;"
I am a peasant girl—my name is Gretchen.
Faus. And may I call thee Gretchen?
Gret. Willingly.
All call me Gretchen.
Faus. Gottfried calls thee Gretchen.
I thought he claimed a cousin's privilege.
Gret. Does Gottfried speak of me?
Faus. He does indeed,
And in such terms of glowing eulogy
I almost feared that he had gained thy heart.
Gret. Feared!
Faus. Pardon me. I spake unwittingly.
His welfare should be very dear to me,
And, therefore, I should rather hope than fear.
Gret. Gottfried has been my brother all my life.
I would not own another man as brother:
Nor would I have him aught but honest "brother."
I love him dearly—dearly. Twice a day
I say a prayer for him, and he for me.
He is my brother. Every hope of his
Is hope of mine. When trouble falls on him
It falls alike on me—he is my brother.
And when he comes—as one day he will come—
To tell me of some good and gentle girl
Who worthily has won his honest heart,
I'll throw my loving arms around her neck,
And call her "sister," as I call him "brother."
Faus. Now Heaven forgive me, but those words of thine
Have freed my bosom from a load of care!
Gret. Didst thou then think I loved him not?
Faus. Nay, nay.
I feared thy love was more than sister-love.
Gret. Dost thou then fear the love that tends to wedlock?

Meph. (*aside*). Not he!
Faus. I hold that truest happiness
Is born of wedlock.
Meph. (*aside*). Bravo, celibate!
Gret. And yet it much rejoiceth thee to know
That cousin Gottfried hath no thought of wedlock?
Faus. Nay, maiden, it rejoiceth me to know
That cousin Gretchen hath no thought of wedlock.
Gret. Thou dost not wish me happy, then?
Faus. My heart!
I would it were my care to make thee happy!
Gret. Now I am sorely puzzled!
Meph. (*aside*). And no wonder!
Gret. Thou wishest Gottfried happy, and me happy;
In wedlock, only, is true happiness;
And yet, forsooth, it much rejoiceth thee
To know that he and I are not to wed!
Meph. (*aside*). Pretty logician! A dilemma, truly!
Faus. Nay, Gretchen, better let the riddle rest
Till time shall solve it!
Gret. Pray forgive me, sir.
I do not doubt thy words are learned words.
Small wonder that I cannot fathom them.
Mar. (*without*). Come, Gretchen! Gretchen!
Meph. (*aside*). Bah! she'll ruin all!
How these old ladies always interfere!

Enter MARTHA.

Mar. Why, who is this?
Gret. A friend of cousin Gottfried,
A very old and very trusty friend;
And so, a very trusty friend of ours.
Mar. We give you welcome, sir. Our home is poor,
But wholly at your service. (*Aside.*) By the mass,
A very straight, and well-favoured gentleman!
Meph. (*aside*). She'll never leave him. I must interfere.
(*Coming forward.*) Pray pardon this intrusion——
Mar. Who is this?
Meph. (*to* GRETCHEN). Do I address Dame Martha?
Gret. No, indeed,
My name is Gretchen—this is Mistress Martha.

Meph. A thousand pardons for my clumsy error.
Misled by a description—"tall and fair,
Eighteen, and very beautiful." The words
Apply, with equal truth, to both the ladies.
Mar. You're vastly civil, sir! (*Aside.*) Upon my word,
It rains well-spoken, proper gentlemen!
Meph. Sisters, of course?
Mar. Nay, she's my sister's child
(*Hastily.*) My sister was, by many years, my senior!
Meph. That's evident. I bring you doleful news—
Yet news not altogether dolorous;
There is a certain spice of comfort in't—
Yet not so much of comfort, I'm afraid,
As to disguise its not unpleasant bitter.
Mar. Your words alarm me! Pray forgive me, sir,
Are you a lawyer?
Meph. I'm the prince of lawyers,
Mar. I am your servant, sir! (*Curtsying.*)
Meph. I'm glad to hear it!
But pardon me, the news I have to tell
Is for your ears alone.
Mar. (*to* GRETCHEN, *who is conversing with* FAUSTUS).
Go, Gretchen dear,
And show the gentleman the Lover's Glen.
Meph. Take heed—the path is dangerously steep—
Be sure you do not trip, my pretty maid.
Gret. I thank you, sir. I know its pitfalls well,
And how to pass them safely. (*To* FAUSTUS.) Wilt thou come?
Faus. To the world's end, fair maiden, an thou wilt.
Gret. (*laughing*). Nay, I'll not pledge thee to so long a journey,
The road is short.
Mar. But very perilous.
Meph. It is, indeed!
Faus. Wilt trust thy hand in mine?
Mar. Ay, take his hand—you will be safer so.
Meph. (*aside*). I doubt it much.
[FAUSTUS *and* GRETCHEN *go down incline.*
Mar. Now we are quite alone.
Meph. The news I bring you is about your husband.
Mar. My husband! he's not coming back!
Meph. No, no—
It's not as bad as that.

Mar. (*relieved*). You frightened me!
Meph. (*with emotion*). He never will come back.
Mar. What mean you, sir?
Meph. I mean that, fighting bravely 'gainst the Turks,
An arrow struck him—and—— (*Faltering.*)
Mar. (*affected*). I guess your meaning!
This is sad news, indeed! Alack-a-day,
I never wished his death! With all his faults,
He was no worse than other husbands are!
Meph. A most affecting tribute to his worth.
Pray pardon my emotion; I've a heart
That melts at weeping women.
Mar. Pray go on;
I'll try to stem my tears. Left he a will?
Meph. He did—a very good and Christian will.
Mar. He *was* a Christian!
Meph. (*sighing*). Ah! His will directs
That you shall spend on masses for his soul,
Five hundred marks.
Mar. (*indignantly*). Five hundred fiddlesticks!
A wicked waste!
Meph. Well, knowing all I know
About his mode of life, I must admit
It *is* a waste; but so his will directs.
Mar. And is that all? Left he no parting words
Of penitence?
Meph. Oh yes; as death drew near,
He much bewailed his manifold transgressions
And said that he could die more tranquilly
Had he his wife's forgiveness.
Mar. Poor dear soul!
I could forgive him, freely, everything,
Except those masses!
Meph. "Though it's true," said he,
"in all our quarrels, and we'd many quarrels,
She was invariably to blame."
Mar. A lie!
A most observable and shameless lie!
Meph. Alas! I fear that, as a rule, his words
Were not distinguished by that love of truth
That you and I deem indispensable.
For instance, he declared that earning bread
To feed so many mouths took all his time,
And left no moment he could call his own!

Mar. Again, a lie! I drudged from morn to night
To feed and clothe his famished family,
While he sat all day fuddling at the ale-house!
Alas, he never cared for wife or child!
Meph. Nay, there you wrong him. Give the deuce his due.
Before he sailed he prayed to all the saints
To bless his arms with full prosperity;
So that, if he in battle should be slain,
His widow yet might live in luxury.
Mar. Poor soul! poor soul! Did Heaven so bless them?
Meph. Yes.
His prayer was heard. Some seven months ago
He helped to take a Turkish galley, fraught
With countless treasure.
Mar. Why, that was well done.
Brave man!
Meph. Brave man!
Mar. And what got he by that?
Meph. His share of prize-money—twelve thousand marks!
Mar. Twelve thousand marks! a fortune in itself!
May Heaven forgive me all my angry words!
He had a brave good heart. Where is the money?
Meph. Ask his good heart. He never could resist
A tale of sorrow eloquently told.
Mar. (*alarmed*). What mean you?
Meph. When at Naples, shortly after,
He saw a girl—young, beautiful, but poor—
A very child, scarce seventeen years old.
His tender heart gave way; she was so poor,
And then so very young—scarce seventeen!
He gave it all to her.
Mar. All!
Meph. Every florin.
But then, she was so young—scarce seventeen——
Mar. At his old tricks! Then there is nothing left?
Meph. You wrong him there; he left a priceless treasure,
Compared with which his other paltry gains
Sink into nothingness—a charming widow!
Mar. You're very good.
Meph. I speak the simple truth.
Come, take good heart. You waste your tears upon

A man who priced you far below your worth.
You're young, and (pardon me) attractive still.
Spend one chaste year of lonely widowhood,
Then seek a better husband.
Mar. As for that,
With all his faults, I might wed worse than he.
(*Sobbing.*) He was a kindly fool!
Meph. Forgiving soul!
Angelic tolerance! Ah, were I sure
That you would treat *my* faults as leniently,
I should be almost tempted to——
Mar. To what?
Oh, sir, you're surely jesting!
Meph. Not at all.
(*Aside.*) I'd better change the subject. This old girl
Would take the very devil at his word.
They're coming back. (*Aloud.*) We'll talk of this anon—
After a year—or two—or three——
Mar. We will!

[*Exeunt together, as* FAUSTUS *and* GRETCHEN *appear at back.*

Faus. That, Gretchen, was *my* dream.
Gret. Oh, marvellous!
That thou and I—each stranger to the other—
Should thus have peopled each the other's vision!
I tremble when I think on't.
Faus. Wherefore so?
Was then the vision so distasteful?
Gret. Nay,
I said not so; but that we two should dream
As we have dreamt—'tis not in nature!
Faus. Promise
That if again thou seest me in a dream
Thou'lt tell me all—the part I play therein—
The words I speak to thee, and thou to me.
Gret. (*confused*). Perhaps. It may be so. I will not promise.
Faus. Tell me again—Gottfried—thou dost not love him?
Gret. He is my brother, sir!
Faus. So he be alway!
There is, perchance, some other envied man
To whom the flower of thine heart is given?
Gret. Indeed, I have no lover, sir.

Faus. None?
Gret. None.
Faus. Thy time will come!
Gret. Perhaps!
Faus. Give me thy hand—
I'll read thy fortune, Gretchen.
Gret. Wonderful!
Canst thou read fortunes? (*Giving her hand.*)
Faus. Ay, indifferent well. (*Playing with her hand.*)
Gret. Speak, sir; I listen.
Faus. (*still playing with her hand*). 'Tis a soft white hand!
Gret. (*demurely*). My fortune, sir.
Faus. (*recollecting himself*). True, true, thy fortune! Come. (*Looking at her palm.*)
Ah, Gretchen, Gretchen, be thou on thy guard!
There cometh one to woo thee. Oh, beware,
Take heed of him—he is no honest man!
Gret. And do I know him, sir?
Faus. Ay, in some sort,
Thou knowest his smooth face, his specious tongue;
But there is that within his evil heart
Of which thou knowest little! Oh, my child,
Beware of him! My child, beware of him!
Gret. Why comes this wicked man to such as I?
I would not aid him in his wickedness.
Faus. In sad and sorrowing heart he comes to thee,
That he may learn the lesson of thy life.
He comes to thee in the fond, foolish hope
That the pure influence of such love as thine
May quell the evil angel at his side;
For wicked as he is, he loveth thee,
With all his poor frail heart he loveth thee!
Gret. 'Tis a strange fortune! I, an untaught girl,
Can teach but little. But if such a one
Come to me sorrowing for his bygone sins,
E'en though I loved him not,
In pity I would strive, with all my heart,
To help him, even as I pray for help.
I do not know why I should fear this man.
Faus. (*earnestly*). Because, with all his sorrow, he is false—
False to himself, and, maybe, false to thee.
Oh, Gretchen, deal not lightly with my words;

Weigh them, and weigh them, o'er and o'er again.
And when thou kneelest by thy bed to-night,
Pray thou for strength as thou hast never prayed;
Pray for a brave and staunch and steadfast heart—
Steadfast to aid this poor weak wanderer
Upon the holy path that thou hast chosen.
But above all, beyond all, and before all,
Steadfast to pluck the traitor from thine
If, in the depth of his mortality,
He strive to gain thee by unholy means!

Gret. (*quietly*). I will take heed, sir. (*Rising and going.*)

Faus. Gretchen—leave me not.

Gret. I go to seek a poor lost, friendless girl,
Who waits for me hard by. I thank you, sir—
I take your kindly counsel in good part.
Thou dost not know the sad and solemn lesson
That her poor blighted heart hath taught us all.
For she was wont to laugh as the birds sing,
From very wealth of idle happiness!
It seems so strange that she should not have died.

Faus. God save thee from such harm! (*Releasing her.*)

Gret. Amen! amen! [*Exit.*

Faus. (*stands as if entranced for a moment; then suddenly*) Why, whither am I going? Grace of Heaven!
Have I been blind? Fool! poor, self-cheating fool!
Stop, while thou mayst—thine eyes are open now!
What seest thou?
Hell against heaven—and thou allied with hell!

[MEPHISTO *appears and listens.*

What seest thou? A pure and blameless child,
Trustful as innocence—her gentle soul,
Calm as a lake in heaven—her angel face,
God's work,
Untainted by man's desecrating touch!
And, at her side,
A scheming mummer, tricked in godly garb—
His tongue all plausible, his heart all false—
His lying manhood traitor to itself!
Faustus, mine enemy, I know thee now!
Faustus, mine enemy, I know thee now!

Meph. Shake off thy Churchman's qualms. Thou art a man,
Wast once a soldier ere thou wast a priest.

Has monkish milk so curdled the hot blood
That bore thee ever where the fight was thickest,
That this raw girl—this butter-churning doll,
Hath turned thee chicken-hearted?

Faus. Hold thy peace,
Accursed fiend, nor dare to breathe *her* name.
Deal thou with me—let Heaven deal with heaven,
I go from her—God shield her from all harm!

Meph. Hush, not so loud, she'll hear you. See, she comes!

[GRETCHEN *appears at back, picking petals from a daisy as she advances.*

Gret. He loves me—he loves me not!
He loves me—he loves me not!

Meph. (*aside to* FAUSTUS). Too late, too late! her heart is given to thee;
Her love is not as other women's love.
Take thyself hence and she will surely die!

[FAUSTUS *watches her, entranced.*

Gret. (*with increased anxiety*).
He loves me—he loves me not!
He loves me—he loves me not!

Meph. See how she trembles as the petals fall.
Poor child, poor child!
She trusts her simple charm, and should it fail,
Her heart will break! Have pity on her, Faustus!

Gret. He loves me—he loves me not!
He loves me—he loves me not!

(*She picks the last petal.*)

Oh, Heaven, have mercy!

Faus. (*breaking from* MEPHISTO, *and rushing to her*). Gretchen, dearly loved!
Mistrust thy charm! By Heaven that hears me now,
He loves thee, Gretchen! loves thee, loves thee, loves thee!

[GRETCHEN *gives a cry of joy and surprise, then falls weeping on his neck.* MEPHISTO *at back, laughing cynically.*

ACT III.

SCENE.—*A market-place in a German town. Entrance to church on right of stage. A stone cross on the left.*

BESSIE, BARBARA, *and* AGATHA *discovered, conversing. Three months have elapsed.*

Aga. Gottfried returned!
Bess. Ay, and a captain, too;
All steel and gold! I hear the people say
That in the ranks of those who fought and bled,
No braver soldier lives!
Bar. (*maliciously*). Alas, poor Gottfried!
Bess. *Poor* Gottfried! To have gained such poverty
I'd given ten years—ay, though it made me thirty!
Bar. Fool! He is head and ears in love with Gretchen!
There's but a bitter time in store for him.
Bess. Ah, 'tis a sorry thing this love!
Aga. For that,
The world without it were a sorry thing!
It's meat and drink to me! (*Sighing.*)
Bar. (*to* BESSIE). Thou foolish child,
Revile not that of which thou knowest naught.
Some day, maybe—observe, I say *maybe*—
Some one will love *thee*—strange things come to pass—
And then thou'lt change thy note.
Bess. If so, I pray
'Twill not be such a one as that gay knight,
Who hath so wondrously bewitched our Gretchen!
But three months since, no happier maiden lived;
And now—kind Heaven help us all!—they say
She will not live to see her twentieth year!

Enter LISA, *unobserved.*

Bar. Girls do not die of honest-hearted love.
(*Maliciously.*) They sometimes die of shame and penitence,
When love has carried them beyond themselves.
Lisa (*coming forward*). Foul shame on thee, who darest couple shame

With the most pure and perfect heart on earth!
May Heaven pardon thee thy bitter words!
I'll stake my soul upon her innocence!
Bar. Thy stake is small—in that thou showest wisdom.
Thou shouldst be an unerring judge of guilt.
But as to innocence—leave innocence
To those who know the meaning of the word.
Lisa. Rail on at me—I heed a mocking tongue
As little as I heed a winter's wind;
For misery hath hardened me to both.
But bow thy head, and stop thy shameless tongue,
When others speak of that pure angel heart,
Which, day by day, draws nearer to its heaven!
Aga. (*looking off*). See, see, the soldiers! [*All look off.*
Bess. Marry, how they march!
I love a soldier?
Aga. (*sighing*). I love several!

Enter the Soldiers, *led by* FRIEDRICH, *and accompanied by* Men *and* Girls. *They halt in line, in front of cathedral, at* FRIEDRICH'S *word.*

Aga. There's Karl!
Bar. And Otto!
Bess. Max!
Aga. And Friedrich, too!
Oh, what a beard!

GOTTFRIED *enters, dressed as an officer.*

Gott. Break off!
[*They recover pikes and break off, mingling with the crowd.*
Whom have we here?
Why, Agatha! and Bessie! Barbara!
[*They crowd around him as he greets them.*
How fares it with you? Are you married yet?
[*They sigh and shake their heads.*
What, none of you? Well, there are plenty here
To set that right!
Aga. Sir, welcome home again!
Bess. And you're a captain!
Gott. (*laughing*). Yes, unworthily!
Fried. Nay, never credit that. There never lived
A doughtier soldier!

Bar. How came it to pass?

Gott. My faith! I hardly know. 'Twas sheer good luck,
We were at rest around a big camp fire,
Dreaming, maybe, of loved ones far away,
When came a sudden trumpet-call—To horse!
Another moment saw us in the saddle,
And tearing on—we knew not why nor whither.
Then came a shock of strong men breast to breast—
A clash of swords—a hurricane of blows—
I on my back, half blind with blood and rage,
A thousand devils dancing in my eyes,
And friends and foes in wild entanglement,
All tussling for my body—then, a wrench—
A mighty shout—another rush, and lo,
A panting dozen of us on a hill,
Besmirched with blood and dust, and all agog
To grasp my hand and hail me as a hero! (*Rises.*)
That's all I know of it, except that I
Went in a trooper, and came out a captain!

[*Several* Soldiers *stroll off with* Girls. *A* Soldier *remains with* BESSIE, *another with* BARBARA, FRIEDRICH *with* AGATHA.

Gott. But there—enough of that! Come, tell me now. (*Anxiously.*) How fares my cousin Gretchen—is she well?

Bess. (*confused*). Yes, yes—that is—— (*Aside to* Soldier.) How shall I answer him?

Gott. Is aught amiss?

Bess. How well thou carriest
Thy new-born rank!

Gott. (*impatiently*). The devil take my rank!
Tell me of Gretchen!

[BESSIE, *at fault, watches her opportunity, and exit with* Soldier.

Bar. Prithee, ask us not,
We would not say a word to give thee pain
On such a day. [*Exit with* Soldier.

Gott. (*amazed*). Pain!

Aga. Nay—be not distressed,
All may be well.

Gott. (*with sudden eagerness*). She lives?

Aga. Yes, yes! she lives!
(*To* FRIEDRICH.) Oh, come away—I dare not tell him more!

Gott. Why, how is this? A curse upon the fools!
Where are their tongues? Is aught amiss with her?
At the bare thought of it my heart stands still!
Fried. Nay, never heed them—girls are all alike—
Mere jealous jades! Thy first and foremost thoughts
Were for another. There's the mischief of it.
Hadst thou but spoken lightly of thy cousin
A shower of praise would have been poured upon her!
Gott. A plague upon their scurril serpent-tongues!
In the old days they knew no jealousy.
My blood is all a-chill! I shake with fear!
I'll to her house at once, and ere an hour,
I'll learn the best and worst! [*Exit.*
Aga. Alas, poor Gottfried!
Fried. It's a strange world! Here is a plain, shrewd fellow,
With so much simple sense that when he hears
Of hearts and homes laid waste through misplaced faith,
Uplifts his hands in wonderment to think
That men can be such fools; and, thanking Heaven
That he is not as blind as others are,
He trusts a pretty woman to his friend!
Aga. But see, she comes! Quick! take me hence away.

Enter FAUSTUS *and* GRETCHEN, *lovingly.* GRETCHEN, *seeing* AGATHA, *advances to speak to her.* AGATHA *turns about, and exit quickly with* FRIEDRICH.

Gret. Oh, Faustus, didst thou see? She turned from me!
Faus. Nay, nay, she saw thee not.
Gret. She saw me well!
They shun me, one and all. Where'er I go,
My loved companions look at me askance,
And then, with sidelong looks and pitying words,
They whisper to each other of my shame!
Faus. Nay, calm thy fears. They do not speak of thee.
Gret. Oh, Faustus, Faustus,
I know the purport of their whispered words,
As though they had been spoken trumpet-tongued!
Faus. Nay, never heed them, Gretchen.
Gret. Never heed them!
They were my world before thou cam'st to me.
They loved me, Faustus, and they honoured me.
And now they turn away from me, as though

I bore a deadly poison in my glance!
Faus. Dismiss them from thy thoughts. We will go hence
To some far-distant land where none shall know us,
And there the bond of all-forgiving Heaven
Shall sanctify our love.
Gret. Oh, Faustus, Faustus,
I have thine heart?
Faus. For ever, and for aye!
Gret. Ah, Heaven is kind to me, for all my sin!
For when my heart is more than common sad,
I need but close my eyes—and all at once,
I wander at my will amid the days
When thou and I may face the world again.
And yet I am no fitting mate for thee.
Thou, a great lord—rich, honoured, and beloved—
I, a poor simple, untaught, peasant girl!
Yet bear with me—my love shall plague thee little,
Though ever and anon I come to thee,
With faltering step and tearful downcast eyes,
A timid suppliant for such alms of love
As thou in thy good-will mayst grant to me.
So, when thou seest, kneeling at thy feet,
Thy poor, mad, love-sick, trusting, trembling wife,
Throw her in charity one little flower
Out of the boundless garden of thy heart,
That she may go rejoicing on her way.
Faus. Thou art, indeed, no fitting mate for me—
Thou, glorious in the sheen of innocence. (*She covers her eyes.*)
I, devil-taught in all unholy art!
Oh, Gretchen, dearly loving—dearly loved—
Wronged beyond all repair, yet all-forgiving,
The simple utterance of thy trusting heart
Is terrible to my unhallowed soul
As the proclaimèd doom of angered Heaven!
Gret. Hush! hush!
I will not suffer thee to utter treason
Against my lord. I am but his handmaiden.
Yet I am jealous of my master's honour
As of his love.
Faus. Ah, Gretchen, if his honour
Were trusty as his love, thy jealousy
Might slumber unto death!

Gret. (*anxiously*). But tell me, Faustus,
When first thou camest to me in the vision,
Hadst thou then loved?
Faus. (*sighing*). Ay, Gretchen, verily!
Gret. With all thy heart?
Faus. Alas, with all my heart!
Gret. (*sadly*). Would Heaven that I had been the first!
Faus. Amen!
Gret. And when she learnt that thou hadst love for me,
Did her heart break?
Faus. Nay, nay—her love had died
A year before. She fled from me, and I,
In a mad frenzy, born of shattered hopes,
Gave up the world, and sought forgetfulness
In the cold cloisters of a monastery.
For twelve long months, twelve weary, weary months,
I strove to keep my ill-considered vows,
Till, wearying of the sacrilegious lie,
I broke my bonds, and cast my priesthood from me.
Gret. (*aghast*). Faustus! thou art a priest? No, no! no, no!
My senses cheat me, or thou mockest me!
Faus. If the mere letter of a reckless vow
Could make me priest, I was a priest indeed.
If vows cast off and scattered to the wind
Can free me from my priesthood, I am free.
Gret. (*dazed*). Thou art a priest! and vowed to Heaven!
(*Suddenly.*) Why then—!
Oh, God preserve me! I am lost indeed!
Oh, grace of Heaven, have mercy on me now!
Oh, take me hence! oh, free me from my life!
What have I done! (*Crossing and falling at foot of cross, and clinging to it.*) Oh, Heaven, pity me!
I knew it not! thou knowest I knew it not!
Faus. (*kneeling over her*). Gretchen, in Heaven's eyes I am no priest—
Apostate, if thou wilt; but still no priest.
If there be power in boundless love to heal
The wound that I have opened in thy heart,
That boundless love is thine.
Gret. (*clinging to cross, and shrinking from him*). Thou art a priest;
Thou hast a Bride—thy Church! Thy vows are plighted,
And thou hast cheated her! Away! away!

Lose not a moment—get thee hence to her—
Upon thy knees confess thy faithlessness,
That she may take thee to her heart again!
Be brave—go thou from my unhallowed arms
Back to the heavenly Bride from whom thou camest!

Faus. Gretchen, be merciful—have pity on me—
Think of our love—I know thou lovest me.
Think of the shame that must await thee here,
If thou art left, unfriended and alone,
To bear the burden I have placed on thee!

Gret. Think not of me—thy wrong to me is naught—
Thy wrong to injured Heaven is all in all!
Go, make thy peace with her while yet thou mayst.
In the rich plenitude of her great heart
Thy Bride may pardon thee! Oh, Faustus, Faustus!
Thou lovest my body, and I love thy soul!
Oh, be thou brave as I! If I can go
From the enduring heaven of thy love
To shame and misery unspeakable,
Canst thou not yield such mortal heart as mine,
For the pure love of an eternal Bride?

Faus. Too late—my love for thee is all-supreme—
And while thou livest, as Heaven hears me now,
I'll leave thee not!

Gret. Faustus, be not deceived.
I love thee with my heart—my heart of hearts—
My very death prayer shall be breathed for thee;
But, though it rend my heart to keep my vow,
As there is pardon for a penitent,
I will not meet thine eyes on earth again!
Nay, touch me not! God pardon thee! Farewell! [*Exit.*

Faus. My doom is spoken and I bow my head.
So, Gretchen, let it be! At thy just bidding
I go to death in life. There is a tomb
In which a living, loving man may bury
All but his aching heart. I go to it!

MEPHISTO *has entered and overheard this.*

Meph. Why, how is this? does not the good work prosper?
Come, come, take heart—'tis but a summer storm—
A day, alone, will bring her to her senses.

Faus. Fiend, I renounce thee! Give me back myself.
Let me go hence; our bond is at an end!
Meph. Nay, that's ungenerous—it is indeed.
You are a Churchman—my profound respect
For all your cloth induced me to forego
The customary writing. Satisfied
That I was dealing with a holy man,
I asked no bond—I trusted to your honour.
And now, to take advantage of my weakness,
And turn my much-misplaced credulity
Against myself—nay, 'tis unworthy of you!
Faus. Poor mocker, hold thy peace—let me go hence,
Back to my cloister, back to the old blank life!
My eyes are open and I see the gulf,
The broad, black gulf, deep as the nether hell,
To which thou leadest me! Release thy grasp—
My heart is changed. Thou hast no hold on me—
Accursed of God—our bond is at an end! (*Breaks from him and rushes into the church.*)
Meph. (*moving after him, but drawing back at sight of the church*). The blight of hell upon thy head, false priest!
False priest? True priest! true to the lying trade
That I have taught thy smug-faced brotherhood!
The old, old doom! My sword against myself!
As once it was, so ever must it be!
Well, go thy ways!
Go to thy kennel, dog Dominican,*
And gnaw the fleshless bones of thy dead joy!
The end has yet to come, and Time's my friend.
But, oh! just Heaven,
Is the fight fair, when this mine enemy
May traffic with me till his end is gained,
Then steep his chicken-soul in penitence,
And cheat damnation? So it comes to pass
I gather fools, blind fools, and only fools!
Oh, for the soul of one wise man—but one—
To show, in triumph, at the Reckoning!

* The Dominicans were stigmatized as "*Domini Canes*"—dogs of the Lord.

Enter GOTTFRIED.

Gott. My search is vain—she is not at her home.
Well, patience, patience! I must wait for her
As best I may! (*Sees* MEPHISTO.) So, so; whom have we here?
Surely I know this worthy gentleman?
Meph. Your humble servant, sir!
Gott. 'Tis Faustus' friend.
Meph. His very loving friend. But welcome home—
Fame has been busy with your worship's valour.
Gott. (*anxiously*). Sir, you can give me news of cousin Gretchen.
Is the maid safe and well?
Meph. Why, as to "well,"
What loving maid is ever in rude health,
When he who has her heart is far afield?
But as to "safe"—why, have you not a friend
Who's sworn to keep a watch upon her safety?
And is not that friend Faustus? Have more faith!
Gott. True, true. He has watched over her?
Meph. He has,
Most conscientiously. He never leaves her.
Gott. I breathe again! My heart had sunk within me.
I asked some village girls an hour ago
For news of her. Well, this one shook her head,
And that one sighed; a third looked dubious,
Uncertain whether she should shake or sigh,
Then finally did both. I breathe again.
Meph. The maid is well—a little pale, perhaps.
But then, poor child—her lover at the wars!
'Twas hardly fair to leave her as you did,
With a mere cold "good-bye."
Gott. Why, as for that,
I have no claim, alas! to rank as lover.
Meph. Ah, pardon me—I know the maiden's heart.
Gott. Sir, you are jesting!
Meph. Jesting? Not at all.
For two months past, the town, from end to end,
Has known no topic but your worship's valour;
And while she trembled for your well-being,
Her bosom swelled with pride when brave men told
Of Gottfried's chivalry. Oh, mark my words,

You have gained more promotion than you wot of!
Gott. Can this be true?
Meph. Quite true—but see, she comes.
With your permission, and no doubt you'll grant it,
I will withdraw—but ere I take my leave,
Allow me to congratulate you both
On the great happiness in store for you.
Gott. You're more than good!
Meph. Some people seem to think so.
But then they flatter me—ha! ha! Good day! [*Exit.*
Gott. At last! at last! Why, how I tremble! Strange!
I am but little moved at thought of death.
I've stared his kingship out of countenance
A dozen times a day.
But, in the presence of this gentle child,
My well-beloved and loving kinswoman,
I am no better than a shaking coward!

Enter GRETCHEN.

Gott. Gretchen! At last!
Gret. (*amazed*). Gottfried!
Gott. Ay, home again!
Hale, sound, and whole, with money in my purse,
And a good-sounding title to my name,
So give me joy of it. Why, how is this?
Hast thou no welcome for me, cousin Gretchen?
Gret. (*with an effort*). Ay, welcome home, dear Gottfried! welcome home!
Gott. But wherefore dost thou sigh?
Gret. Nay, heed me not,
But tell me of thyself—the country side
Rings with the tidings of thy valour.
Gott. Bah!
I am no hero, Gretchen, in myself—
A plain, rude man, with just so much of sense
As to go gladly two leagues round about
To save a broken crown; who loves not blood—
Unless, indeed, it be his own, and that
He loves too well to lose it willingly!
So, cousin Gretchen,
If there be aught of valour in my deeds,
The merit of it is thine own, not mine.
Gret. Mine, Gottfried? mine?

Gott. Ay, for it came from thee!
It lives for thee, and it will die with thee!
Gretchen, my dearly loved——
Gret. Oh, Gottfried! Gottfried!
Gott. For many a year, at home and far away,
I've had thee at my heart, but did not dare
To speak to thee of love. Misjudge me not—
I do not blush that I have loved thee, Gretchen.
God sent such truth and virgin innocence
To teach rough men how holy love may be.
Let that man blush (if such a one there live)
Who knows thy maiden heart and loves thee not.
I would not be that man!
But if, in giving tongue to my dumb love,
I overstep the bounds of reverence,
Look down in pity on my poor mad heart;
And tell me gently that for man to hope
For more than sister-love from such as thou
Is more than man should dare—and I'll believe it!
Gret. Gottfried, have mercy on me and be silent!
Dear Gottfried—brother, be my brother still!
Oh, be my brother—I have need of thee!
Such need! Oh, Heaven pity me, such need!
Gott. Gretchen, my sister, if no more than brother,
Then always brother, now as heretofore!
Why dost thou weep? Nay, nay, take heart again.
Tell me thy sorrow.
Gret. (*aghast*). Tell it unto *thee*?
No, not to thee! I have my punishment.
If thou hast love for me—I know thou hast—
Go, pray with all thy heart for such as I.
If thou hast pity—and I know thou hast—
Ask me no more, but go and pray for me!
Gott. Well, be it so. Enough that thou hast cause
To hide thy grief. May Heaven lighten it!
I seek to know no more. My love for thee
Is deathless as the faith it feeds upon!
Gret. Thy love for me comes of thy faith in me?
Gottfried!
Let thy love die! Uproot it from thine heart;
It feeds on falsehood! Oh, uproot the weed;
It hath no place amid the God-grown flowers—
Truth, steadfast honour, simple manliness—
That blossom in that goodly garden-land.

Let thy love die, brave heart; I am unworthy!
Gott. (*horror-struck*). Gretchen! what sayest thou?
Unworthy? And of what? Of such as I?
(*After a pause.*) God help me if I read thy words aright!
Thou, Gretchen, thou? No, no—it could not be!
Thou, Gretchen? Oh, mankind is not so base!
Gret. Oh, Gottfried, pity me—my heart is broken!
Gott. Oh, my poor love—my gentle angel-heart!
Oh, death, kind death—that thou canst surely strike,
Hadst thou no pity on this poor fair flower?
Oh, death, kind death,
Would Heaven's mercy *thou* hadst been at hand,
To fold my darling in thy sheltering wings!
(*With sudden fury.*) His name? Quick! quick! His name!
Gret. (*wildly*). Nay, ask me not!
In this have mercy!
Gott. (*drawing his sword*). Quick—his name, I say!
Gret. No, no—ah, Gottfried, spare him!
Gott. Quick—his name!
Gret. He loved me, Gottfried—spare him—he is gone.
Oh, Gottfried, Gottfried—I—— (*Falls senseless at his feet.*)
Gott. Come hither, all!
[*During these lines the* Soldiers, FRIEDRICH, *and* Girls *have entered.*
His name, give me his name! (*They turn away.*) Why, how is this?
Why turn you from me, comrades? Have you heard?
Fried. Ay, Gottfried, we have heard.
Gott. A curse on you!
Why hold you back his name?
Fried. In mercy to thee.
Gott. (*seizing him and threatening him*). Have mercy on thyself! Am I in mood
To play with words? I charge thee on thy life,
Give me his name.
Fried. Then steel thy heart to hear it.
They say it was thy friend!
Gott. My friend?
Fried. Ay, Faustus!
Gott. Faustus? My friend? They lie!
Bar. Alas, alas!
She hath confessed the truth!

Gott. Oh, earth and heaven!
Are there no bounds to human devil-hood?
Are heaven's weapons sheathed? Is honour dead?
Has innocence cast off her majesty? (*Unhooks his scabbard and breaks it.*)
Away! away! I have no need of thee!
Good, trusty sword, henceforth sheathless thou
Until I home thee to the very hilt
In the foul slough of his accursed heart—
His heart, and then—mine own!

ACT IV.

Room in MARTHA'S *cottage; a couch in recess of window. Night. A small lamp burning on pedestal table at head of couch.*

Enter LISA *from without, meeting* MARTHA.

Mar. (*anxiously*). Well, hast thou seen the holy Anselm?
Lisa. Yes;
Yet but one moment I had been too late.
Old Karl is dying, and the holy man,
Being called in haste to minister to him,
Was on the eve of starting as I came.
Mar. (*testily*). Old Karl! Must he needs die this very night!
But thou didst tell the holy man that Gretchen
Was sorely ill, and stood in urgent need
Of his most comfortable ministry?
Lisa. Yes, yes. Alas that it should be the truth!
He promised he would come without delay.
How fares our loved one? Is her mind at rest?
Mar. Alas, I fear that death draws nigh apace!
There is a strange look in her wondering eyes
That is not of this world—a bright calm light,
As though she saw far, far beyond the grave.
When she is taken, Heaven help the poor!
There's not an ailing soul for miles around
Who does not bless her ministering hand!
Lisa. If the old tale be true, when such as she

Are taken hence to their appointed heaven,
Good angels come to earth to take their place
And finish their good works; and so the poor
Who looked to them are clothed and comforted,
The hungry fed, the sick and dying healed.
Mar. Her work is all her own, and would be so
Though Heaven sent the best of all good angels!
[GRETCHEN *appears at door, dressed in white. She is pale and weak.*
Gret. Lisa, thy hand!
Lisa. Gretchen, what dost thou here
Gret. My heart is sad. I cannot rest in peace.
Mar. But thou shouldst not have left thy bed, dear child.
The night is cold.
Gret. Alas, it matters little!
The end is near—the tale is nearly told.
Lisa. Nay, nay—not yet! not yet! Oh, Gretchen, Gretchen!
While life remains to thee, pray thou for life!
Oh! pray, pray, pray!
For Heaven hears the prayers of such as thou.
Oh, mercy, mercy on my misery!
How shall I live without thy saving love?
How shall I die when thou are gone from me?
Oh! Gretchen, stay with us, oh! stay with us!
As thou, in the rich love of thy great heart,
Didst look in pity on my bygone sin,
Have mercy on the love I live upon,
And pray for life! Oh, Gretchen, pray for life!
Gret. Lisa,
I looked in pity on thy bygone sin
In the poor pride of an untempted heart,
As one to whom such sorrow could not come.
I looked upon such unknown sin as thine
As a rich queen might look upon starvation—
In pitying wonder that such things could be.
And now—
God pardon me, as thou wast, so am I!
Lisa. But, Gretchen, think of him, he loveth thee!
His heart is all thine own, oh, live for him!
Oh, Gretchen, for his sake, if not for ours!
Remember him—his life's in thy hands!
Gret. Remember him!

Ay, I remember him! Had I the power
To blot him from my aching memory,
Even as I have torn him from my heart,
Then I could die in hope!

Mar. Ah! Gretchen, Gretchen,
Pray Heaven thy love *be* dead!

Gret. I have no love.
There is no biding place for earthly love
Within a heart rent with the agony
Of sacrilege, unpardoned, unatoned.
Her minister! her chosen instrument!
And I—— Oh, Heaven, have mercy on my soul!
I knew it not—thou knowest I knew it not! (*Falls weeping on the couch.*)

Mar. Who knocks?

Lisa (*opening door*). 'Tis Father Anselm.

Enter ANSELM, *followed by* FAUSTUS, *who is in a monk's dress, his face hidden by his cowl.*

Ans. *Benedicite!*
Is this the poor sick maid who seeks our aid?
(*To* GRETCHEN, *who is still sobbing.*) Nay, dry thy tears, my child; however grave
Thy burden, Heaven's grace will lighten it.
(*To* MARTHA.) Old Karl is even at the point of death,
And I must go to him; but take good heart;
This holy father will abide with her
Until I come again. The old man's house
Is near at hand?

Mar. Good father, follow me
And I will lead thee thither.

Ans. Be it so.

[*Exeunt* ANSELM *and* MARTHA. *Exit* LISA *by another door.* GRETCHEN *weeping at couch.*

Faus. (*removing his cowl*). Gretchen!

Gret. (*starting up amazed*). *Thou* here! Oh, Faustus, get thee hence.
Have I not sinned enough, that thou hast come
To fill my dying heart with thoughts of thee?
I am not thine! Go, leave me to myself.

Faus. As stands a felon at the judgment-seat,
Bent with the burden of his published shame,
Stand I before thee!

Gret. I am not thy judge.

Faus. I have been judged, and to my lifelong doom
I bow. Yet by the love of long ago—
By the pure days when yet that love was young,
Shed but one ray of light—one gleam of hope
Upon the darkness of my dungeoned soul!

Gret. What wouldst thou with me? Speak, my hour is brief.

Faus. Time was when every tongue was eloquent
With legends of thy God-sent charity.
Gretchen,
Of all the starving crowd thy hands have fed,
Never was wretch so famine-worn as I.
Of all the agony thy words have soothed,
Never soothed they such agony as mine!
I come to thee, as others came to thee,
In shame and sorrow—hungry and athirst,
For pity and for pardon.

Gret. Oh, Faustus, is it meet that thou and I,
Two trembling sinners, guilty hand in hand,
Should ask each other's mercy? Who am I
That I should deal in pardons!

Faus. (*wildly*). What am I
That I should live unpardoned! Hear my prayer,
And save me from myself. Thy love is dead.
So let it rest—'tis fit that it should die.
I would not raise it from its solemn grave
For all the joy that it would bring to me.
I pray thy pity, Gretchen, not thy love.

Gret. Kneel thou to Heaven, and not to such as I;
So shall thy pardon come from that great Source
From which alone can pardon profit thee.
My time is brief—I have to make my peace! [*Exit.*

Faus. Gone! And with her, my only hope on earth!
Oh, Heaven, send me my death—send me my death,
And all that follows death! Am I to live
With this black blight upon my tortured soul.
Or carry with me into dark old age
The canker of an unforgiven sin?
Curse not the world with my unhallowed life,
Or me, with life on this thy goodly world!
Send me my death, oh Heaven—send me my death!

[*Falls sobbing on table. Door opens, and* GOTTFRIED *enters, with sword drawn, and another in his*

hand. He pauses, advances to FAUSTUS, *strikes him heavily on the shoulder, and puts one sword on table.*

Gott. Sleeper, awake! Thine hour or mine hath come!
Faus. (*starting and turning round*). Gottfried!
Gott. Ay, Gottfried! Oh, mine enemy!
Arise, destroyer! Thou that layest waste
The flowers of heaven with thy plague-laden blast!
Thou devil-wielded scourge! Thou thief of souls!
Make thine account with God—thy course is run!
Faus. Spare thou thy barbèd words for worthier foes.
There is a voice within my tortured heart
To whose anathemas thine utterance
Is but a kindly whisper. Use thy sword!
Gott. Then strip thy monkish frock, and take thy guard.
Strip off thy frock, I say—or does it cling
More closely to thy limbs than heretofore?
Time was when thou couldst cast thy slough at will.
Has that time gone? or does thy craven heart
Seek sanctuary in a Churchman's garb?

[*Involuntarily* FAUSTUS *grasps sword on table.*

Despair thy hope—the rag will serve thee not.
Monk or no monk, as Heaven defends the right,
To-night thou diest! so arm and take thy guard!
Faus. (*after a pause throws down sword*). Gottfried, I'll fight thee not. Thy cause is just.
I am a blot upon the fruitful world.
Away with me! I have no claim to live!
Gott. Defend thy life! Base as thy soul has shown,
I would not be thine executioner;
Yet, by the rood, defence or no defence,
I will fulfil my mission. Take thy sword!
I know no mercy when I war with hell!
Faus. (*passionately*). Strike, Gottfried, strike! In the good days gone by
Thy loving hand was ever on the stretch
To aid me with a hundred offices,
The least of which should knit my heart to thine
As brother's heart to brother. Crown thy work

Enter GRETCHEN; *she stands horrified.*

With this the kindliest of thy kindly deeds! (*Tearing open his gown.*)

Comrade in arms—brother in all but blood—
Here is my heart—kill the accursed thing,
It eats my flesh! Strike surely and strike deep!
Gott. So be it then! Thine hour has come! Good sword,
That never yet shed undefended blood,
I pray thy pardon for the infamy
I place upon thee!
[GOTTFRIED *is about to strike.* GRETCHEN *staggers forward and places herself before* FAUSTUS, *with her arms extended to protect him.*
Gret. Gottfried! stay thy hand,
Or slay me with him! Oh, for shame, for shame!
Is this thy love for me? He is to me
As I to thee, and wouldst thou prove thy love
By slaying him to whom my heart is given?
Gottfried!
I place thy brotherhood upon the test,
And by that test, so shall it stand or fall.
If it be free from the base taint of earth,
As I believe it, from my heart, to be,
It will arise unshaken from the proof.
If it be as the love of other men,
Slay him—and me! (*Kneeling to him.*) My brother—oh my brother!
I know thy love—this is its counterfeit;
I know thy love—thou wouldst lay down thy life
To add one hour to mine. Thou wouldst not rob
The few brief hours that yet are left to me!
Thou seest, I know thy love! Oh, brother, brother,
Be strong in mercy! Is his wrong to thee
Less than his wrong to me?—and I forgive him!
May Heaven have pity on my woman's heart—
I love this man!
Gott. (*after a pause*). Go, sir—I spare thy life.
My heart has lost its vigour, and my hand
Is stayed against thee. Go! thou knowest now
The virtue of her love—its alchemy
Hath made *thee* sacred in mine eyes! Go, sir,
Amend thy mis-spent life—she loveth thee!
When evil thoughts assail thine impious soul,
Remember that, despite thy wrong to her,
She loveth thee!
If a man's heart is beating in thy breast,

That amulet should hold thee Satan-proof! [*Exit.*

Faus. Gretchen, I thank thee for my granted life,
For it hath taught me that, for all my sin,
Thine heart is turned towards me. But for that,
'Twere better I had died by Gottfried's hand
Than by mine own!

Gret. Faustus, thou shalt not die.
Oh, Faustus, Faustus! *I* am marked for death—
Is not one life enough!

Faus. Ay, verily,
So that that life be mine. I must atone!

Gret. Thou shalt atone, for thou hast greatly sinned—
Thou shalt atone with worthy deeds lifelong;
Thou shalt atone with steadfast, humbled heart,
With faith, and truth, and works of charity.
Atone with life—with brave and blameless life,
And not with coward death. Resign thyself.

Enter LISA.

Heaven wills that thou shouldst live—that I should die—
So let us yield ourselves to Heaven's will!

[GRETCHEN *grows gradually fainter.* FAUSTUS *leads her to couch.*

Enter MARTHA *and* ANSELM.

Mar. Too late! Oh, Heaven, too late!

Lisa. Oh, Gretchen, Gretchen!
Poor loved one—speak to us—one word! one word!
Oh, Heaven, pity us!

Gret. Nay, gentle one,
Weep not for Gretchen—three sad months ago
Poor Gretchen died! 'Tis a long time to mourn,
Three months! Nay, Martha, dry thine eyes again,
And deck thyself as for a holiday.
Rejoice with me—
The days of mourning for thy kinswoman
Are past and gone!

Faus. Oh, Gretchen—oh, my love—
My heart will break. Gretchen, tell me, at least,
That thou forgivest me!

[*Faint indications of coming daylight are seen through window.*

Gret. I love thee, Faustus
Ah me! but it is meet that I should die,
For I can turn my head, but not my heart—
And I can close mine eyes, but not my heart—
And still my foolish tongue, but not my heart—
So, Faustus, it is meet that I should die!
Weep not— [FAUSTUS *rises and turns towards* ANSELM.
I go from Death to Life—from Night to Day!
Weep not—my heart is glad, and all my cares
Fold their black wings and creep away abashed,
As shrinks the night before the coming dawn.

[*The lamp at her feet begins to die out.* MEPHISTO *is seen at door.*

Farewell!
The hand of death is heavy on my heart,
The little lamp of life is dying out.
It matters not—the dreary Night is past,
And Daylight is at hand!

[*She raises her hands towards the rising sun, which is seen through the window. Her hand falls slowly and she dies, as the light at her head goes out, and the sky is filled with the splendour of the coming day.* ANSELM, *consoling* FAUSTUS, *raises his crucifix in the air.* MEPHISTO, *at door, cowers before it. During* GRETCHEN'S *speech, the music of an organ is heard faintly; it swells into a loud peal as* GRETCHEN *dies.*

TOM COBB;

OR,

FORTUNE'S TOY.

AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL FARCICAL COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS.

First produced at St. James's Theatre, under the management of MISS LITTON, *on Saturday, 24th April,* 1875.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Colonel O'Fipp, *an Irish Adventurer*	...	Mr. C. Cooper.
Tom Cobb, Whipple } *Young Surgeons*	... ...	Mr. Royce. / Mr. Bruce.
Matilda O'Fipp, *the Colonel's Daughter*	...	Miss E. Challis.
Mr. Effingham	*Members of a romantic family*	Mr. De Vere.
Mrs. Effingham		Mrs. Chippendale.
Bulstrode Effingham		Mr. Hill.
Caroline Effingham		Miss Litton.
Biddy		Miss Doyne.
Footman		Mr. Russell.

TOM COBB;

OR,

FORTUNE'S TOY.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*A shabby but pretentious sitting-room in* COLONEL O'FIPP'S *house. Breakfast laid. Enter* TOM COBB, *with open letter in his hand.*

Tom. I haven't a penny—I haven't the ghost of a prospect of a penny. In debt everywhere, and now I'm told that judgment's been signed against me for £250 by the cruellest Jew in Christendom! Upon my soul, it's enough to make a fellow shy things about, I swear it is! But everything always *did* go wrong with me, even before I was born, for I was always expected to be a girl, and turned out something quite different, and no fault of mine, I'm sure! (*Producing pistol.*) Oh, if I was only quite, quite sure I knew how to load it, I'd blow my brains out this minute! I would, upon my word and honour!

Enter MATILDA.

Mat. Eh! and what good 'ld that do, dear?

Tom. It would rid the world of an unhappy wretch. The world's a beast, and I hate it.

Mat. Then if you hate it, what d'ye want to be doing it a good turn for? Sure it would be a bad bargain, lovey, for *you'd* lose the world, whereas the world 'ld only lose *you.* (*Takes pistol away from him.*)

Tom. There's truth in that.

Mat. If I was you, dear, I'd go on living to spite it.

Tom. Oh, ain't that small! Oh, ain't that like a woman!

Mat. And, after all, ye're not so badly off. Don't ye board and lodge on nominal turr'ms with a rale cornel?

Tom. Yes, that's true enough.

Mat. And ain't ye engaged to a rale cornel's daughter? And isn't *that* something to live for? (*Goes to table and cuts bread and butter.*)

Tom (*seated*). Oh, I've plenty to live *for*, but I've nothing to live *on*. Upon my word, Matilda, when you come to think of it, it *is* a most extraordinary thing that I can't get any patients! I'm a qualified practitioner, right enough! I've passed the College of Surgeons!

Mat. So have I, dear, often.

Tom. You can't be more a surgeon than I am, put it how you will; but nobody seems to know it, and I'm sure I don't know how to tell 'em. I can't send sandwich men about with advertisements—the College wouldn't like that. I can't hang placards out from a real colonel's balcony, "Walk up, walk up, this is the Shop for Amputations!" or, "To married couples and others"—the Horse Guards wouldn't like that. (*Taking up carving-knife.*) Upon my word, Matilda, when I look at you, and reflect that there isn't an operation in the whole range of practical surgery that I shouldn't be delighted to perform upon you at five minutes' notice for nothing, why, it *does* seem a most extraordinary thing that I can't get any patients!

Enter COLONEL O'FIPP, *in seedy, showy dressing-gown.*

O'Fi. Good mornin', Thomas; Matilda, my own, the mornin to ye. (*Kisses her.*) Breakfast ready? That's well. Good appetite, Thomas? (*They sit to breakfast.*)

Tom. Tremendous. (*Taking an egg.*)

O'Fi. (*aside*). Then I'll spile it for ye. (*Aloud.*) Don't crack that egg till you're sure ye'll want it. (*Takes it from him.*) Thomas Cobb, I'm goin' to have a wurr'd or two with ye about your prospects, sorr.

Tom. Oh, Lord! (*Turns away from his breakfast.*)

O'Fi. When I gave my consint to yer engagement with me beautiful and beloved daughter—— Don't cry, my child.

Mat. No, pa. (*Takes an egg.*)

O'Fi. Ye tould me ye were about to purchase a practice; and, like a simple old soldier, I believed ye.

Mat. Sure, and so he was. Didn't ye introduce him to Ben Isaacs, and didn't he lend him the money to do it?

Tom. Which your papa immediately exchanged for bills.

O'Fi. Which is another turr'm for money.

Tom. Another term for money?

Mat. Papa has always been accustomed to regard his I.O.U.'s as currency.

Tom. Why, who do you suppose would sell me a practice for a bundle of your I.O.U.'s?

O'Fi. My name, sorr, is considered in the City to be as good for a thousand pounds as for a hundred.

Mat. Papa's is one of the oldest names in the kingdom.

O'Fi. Yes, sorr. And let me tell ye it's on some of the oldest bills in the kingdom, too. Such is the value of my name that I suppose I have renewed oftener than any man aloive! And it isn't every man that can say *that!*

Tom. But when I try to discount your paper, capitalists always say, "Who's O'Fipp?" And when I tell 'em he's a colonel, they say, "What's he a colonel of?"

O'Fi. Colonel of a regiment, to be sure.

Tom. Yes, but in what service?

O'Fi. Never mind the surrvice, sorr. It was the 27th ridgment of it. That's enough for any man. There's many a surrvice besides the British surrvice, I believe, sorr?

Tom. Oh, I believe there's a good many.

O'Fi. There's the Spanish surrvice, sorr—and the Hungarian surrvice—and the Italian surrvice, and the French surrvice, and the——

Mat. And the dinner surrvice.

Tom. And the Church Service.

O'Fi. No, sorr. When a gintleman asks me my ridgment, he has a right to know it, and I tell him at once. But when he asks me in what surrvice, sorr, why that's a piece of impertinent curiosity, and I ask him "what the devil he means by it?"

Tom. Oh, I'm sure *I* don't care; the regiment's quite enough for *me*. But then I ain't a capitalist.

O'Fi. Well, sorr, let us come to the p'int. For two months ye've been engaged to my lovely and accomplished daughter —— Don't cry, my love. (*To* MATILDA.)

Mat. No, pa. (*Takes an egg.*)

O'Fi. And ye're as far from marrying her as iver. Now during the last two months my poor child's been wastin' the best years of her loife, and she can't wait much longer.—Can ye, Matilda?

Mat. 'Deed, and I can't then. I'm twenty-noine and a bit.

O'Fi. She's twenty-noine—and a bit! Now it's roight to tell ye, and you too, Matilda, that a gintleman of good birth, irreproachable morals, and a considerable command of ready money, has done me the honour to propose for me daughter's hand. I say no more, sorr. As a man of honour there's two courses open to ye, and I leave ye to decide which of 'em ye'll take. [*Exit.*

Tom (*in great grief*). Matilda, did you hear that?

Mat. Yes, Tom, I heard that.

Tom (*furious*). Who is the scoundrel who has dared to aspire to your hand?

Mat. 'Deed, and I don't know, but it'll be some one who's lendin' money to papa. I ginerally go with the bills.

Tom (*aghast*). What!

Mat. When a body falls in love with me, papa ginerally borrows money of him, and he gives bills, and I go with 'em. It's a rule of the family. (*Rises.*)

Tom. But surely you'll never countenance such a bargain?

Mat. 'Deed, and I don't want to, Tom dear, but I've countenanced it for thirteen years, and sure it 'ld look odd to refuse now. Besides, dear, I'm not as young as I was.

Tom. No, but then you're not as old as you might be.

Mat. No, but I'm as old as I mean to be. There's razin for ye, Tom, and ye want it.

Tom. Well, I'm sure I don't know what to do; I'm at my wits' end.

Mat. Then it's the beginning end, and there's hope for ye yet. (*Knock.*)

Tom. Who's that?

Mat. There, now, if it ain't your friend Whipple's carriage!

Tom. Whipple! Whipple with a carriage! A fool, an impostor, a quack, with a carriage! What does he want to come flaunting his one-horse fly in my face for? There, I actually did that man's botany papers for him at the College, and now he's rolling in fever patients,—literally *rolling* in fever patients,—while I haven't one to my back!

Mat. Well, maybe he'll help ye if ye ask him. He's a pleasant man.

Tom. Pleasant, is he? I don't know what you call pleasant. Why, there's a squalid old pauper idiot, a patient of his, who's got no name of his own, and Whipple christened him Tom Cobb, because he says he's the ugliest old lunatic he ever saw and reminds him of me. And all the boys in the neighbour-

hood have taken it up, and he's been known as Tom Cobb for the last two years. That's pleasant of Whipple.

Mat. Sure, it's his joke.

Tom. Yes, I know it's his joke, but I don't like his joke. One Tom Cobb's enough at a time, and—(*taking out pistol*)—if I was only quite, quite sure I knew how to load it, I'd snuff one of 'em out this minute. I would; upon my word and honour, I would! [*Exit* COBB.

Mat. Poor Tom! He's an innocent boy, and he's fond of me, and I like him too, and it's a pity he ain't rich. And now who's the gentleman with the command of ready money who's proposed for me, I'd like to know?

Enter BIDDY.

Bid. Mr. Whipple. [*Exit* BIDDY.

Enter WHIPPLE.

Whi. Miss Matilda, don't think me premature for calling, but I came because I really couldn't wait any longer.

Mat. And ye did right; sit ye down.

Whi. I couldn't help it; you're not angry? (*Sits.*)

Mat. Not I! If ye couldn't help it, what were ye to do? (*Sits.*)

Whi. I declare I haven't slept a wink all night from anxiety.

Mat. Would ye like to take a snooze on the sofa?

Whi. A snooze? Miss Matilda, hasn't your father told you?

Mat. Told me—told me what?

Whi. Why, that I——

Mat. Ye niver mean to sit there and tell me ye're the young gintleman of high family, unblemished morals, and considerable command of ready money?

Whi. That's me—he *has* told you. Yes, Miss Matilda, I have dared——

Mat. But don't ye know I'm engaged to your friend, Tom Cobb?

Whi. Tom Cobb! Yes, I know you are. A mule, a clod, an unsuccessful clod. Yes, I know he's tied to you as a log is tied to the leg of a runaway donkey. I beg your pardon—I don't mean that; but you can't really love him?

Mat. 'Deed, and I like him very well then. He's a good boy. But tell me now—is it bills?

Whi. (*rather taken aback*). Well, yes; since you put it like that, it is bills.

Mat. Then I tell ye what, Mr. Whipple; I'm tired of being handed over with stamped paper.

Whi. (*earnestly*). There was *no* stamp on it; indeed, there was no stamp on it. It was an I.O.U.

Mat. It's the same thing. I like Tom Cobb better than I like you, and if he'll marry me in a month I'll have him, and if he won't, why I'll talk to you. There's your answer now, and don't bother again.

Whi. In a month! (*Aside.*) In a month! He *shan't* marry her in a month! If I can only manage to get him out of the way, and keep him there for a few weeks! (*Suddenly.*) I'll do it! It'll cost money, but I'll do it.

Enter TOM COBB.

Ah! Tom, my boy, I'm delighted to see you; how uncommonly jolly you're looking, to be sure!

Tom (*very miserably*). Yes, I should say I was looking uncommonly jolly.

Whi. Why, what's the matter?

Tom. Why, a good many things; and look here, Whipple, I wish next time you want a godfather for a nameless pauper you'd choose somebody else.

Whi. Oh! you mean ugly old Tom Cobb! I beg your pardon—but he was so like you I couldn't help it. But there, that needn't distress you—for he died last night, and there's an end of him. Never mind, old boy, I'll make it up to you some day.

Tom (*suddenly*). Will you? Whipple, I'm in an awful fix about Ben Isaacs' bills; now you're well off—I did your botany paper for you at the College—will you lend me £250 on my personal security? I want a plain answer—yes or no.

Whi. My dear boy, of course; with pleasure.

Tom (*delighted and surprised*). My dear Whipple!

Whi. You shall have it, of course. (*Feeling for his handkerchief.*)

Tom. When?

Whi. Why, now, if you like.

Tom. What—the money?

Whi. No; the plain answer. (*Takes out handkerchief, uses it, and returns it.*) I haven't a penny at my bankers. I've lent it all—to the colonel. What have you done with the money?

Tom. Well, *I* lent it all to—the Colonel. He borrowed it the

very day he agreed to my engagement with Matilda; didn't he, dear?

Mat. (*clearing away breakfast things*). Just that very same day, dear. Directly after I told him ye were going to propose for me, and immediately before ye did it.

Whi. Good soldier, the Colonel.

Tom. Oh, he didn't borrow it because he wanted it; he borrowed it to prevent my wasting it in foolishness. He said so; but I *should* like to have a go in at some foolishness now and then, if it was only a pair of trousers or half a dozen socks.

Mat. Yes, ye want socks.

[*Exit* MATILDA *with breakfast things.*

Tom. But what's the use of socks to a man who's going to blow his brains out? Whipple, I do assure you on my honour, if I knew a safe and perfectly painless way of popping out of this world into comfortable quarters in the next, I'd adopt it—upon my word and honour, I'd adopt it!

Whi. (*suddenly*). Do you mean that?

Tom. Yes, I mean that.

Whi. Then I'll help you. Now, observe: my old pauper patient, Tom Cobb, died last night. He hasn't a friend or relation in the world to claim him. Well, I certify to his death, and he's comfortably buried, and there's an end of old Tom Cobb.

Tom. The ugly one?

Whi. The ugly one, of course.

Tom. I don't see what you're driving at.

Whi. Don't you? Why, if Tom Cobb's dead and buried, what becomes of the bill Tom Cobb gave Ben Isaacs?

Tom. But the ugly Tom Cobb never gave a bill. (*A light breaks upon him.*) Oh, you cunning devil!

Whi. Now then, what d'ye say to dying by deputy?

Tom. By Jove, it's worth thinking of.

Whi. Worth thinking of? It's worth jumping at without stopping to think at all.

Tom. I believe you're right. (*After a pause.*) I'll do it! I'm a dead man! I can come to life again, I suppose, when I like?

Whi. Oh yes, under another name. But you'll have to hide away for a few months.

Tom. Oh, ah; but (*turning out his pockets*) how about burial fees?

Whi. Will five and twenty pounds do it?

Tom. Five and twenty pounds will just do it.

Whi. Then come along at once to my house, and take leave of this life.

Tom. But you'll let me take a last farewell of Matilda?

Whi. No, no; bother Matilda! (*Taking his arm.*)

Tom. Oh, but you mustn't bother Matilda!

Whi. Now, now, do come along.

Tom. Hang it all, let me see her before the tomb closes over me for three months!

Whi. No, you can write to her; now, come at once, or I won't help you.

Tom. Then farewell, Matilda; I go to my doom. Whipple, during my decease I confide her to you. Be a mother to her. (*Kissing photograph.*) Farewell, unhappy Matilda; be true to my memory, for I'm as good as dead, and you're engaged to a body! (*He staggers out wildly, followed by* WHIPPLE.)

Enter MATILDA.

Mat. Now, where's he gone with Whipple, I'd like to know? That Whipple's up to some bedevilment with him, I'll go bail.

Enter BIDDY.

Bid. Please, miss, here's a young lady as says she must see you, and won't take no denial.

Mat. A young lady?

Enter CAROLINE, *in great agitation. She is a romantic-looking young lady, with long curls and gushing, poetical demeanour. She pauses melodramatically.*

Car. Matilda! Don't ye know me?

Mat. 'Deed, and I don't. Why, if it isn't my old schoolfellow, Carrie Effingham! It's Carrie, as I'm a living sinner!

Car. Yes; I came to town yesterday; and though ten long weary years have flown since last we met, I could not pass my dear old friend's abode without one effort to awake those slumbering chords that, struck in unison, ever found ready echoes in our sister hearts.

Mat. Why, ye talk nonsense as well as ever, dear; but I'm glad to see ye. (*She sits.* CAROLINE *kneels at her feet.*)

Car. How well—how very well you're looking—and, heavens! how lovely!

Mat. Yes, dear. Ye're lookin' older. Ye're not married yet, I suppose?

Car. Alas, no! (*Wiping her eyes.*)

Mat. Don't fret, dear; it'll come.

Car. Oh, Matilda, a maiden's heart should be as free as the summer sun itself; and it's sad when, in youth's heyday, its trilling gladness has been trodden underfoot by the iron-shod heel of a serpent!

Mat. Yes; it's sad when that's happened. Tell me all about it.

Car. Swear that, come what may, no torture shall ever induce you to reveal the secret I am going to confide to you?

Mat. Oh, I'll swear that with pleasure.

Car. Will you believe me when I tell you that—I have loved?

Mat. Oh yes!

Car. And that I have been loved in return?

Mat. Well, ye—es. Oh yes; it's possible.

Car. He was a poet-soldier, fighting the Paynim foe in India's burning clime—a glorious songster, who swept the lute with one hand, while he sabred the foe with the other!

Mat. Was he in the band?

Car. The band! He was a major-general! (*Rises.*)

Mat. Oh! Handsome?

Car. I know not. I never saw him.

Mat. Ye never saw him?

Car. I never saw his face; but—I have seen his soul!

Mat. What's his soul like?

Car. Like? Like the frenzied passion of the antelope! Like the wild fire of the tiger-lily! Like the pale earnestness of some lovesick thunder-cloud that longs to grasp the fleeting lightning in his outstretched arms!

Mat. Was he often like that?

Car. Always!

Mat. A pleasant man in furnished lodgings! And where did ye see his soul?

Car. (*sits*). He poured it into the columns of the *Weybridge Watchman*, the local paper of the town that gave him birth. Dainty little poems, the dew of his sweet soul, the tender frothings of his soldier brain. In them I read him, and in them I loved him! I wrote to him for his autograph—he sent it. I sent him my photograph, and directly he saw it he proposed in terms that cloyed me with the sweet surfeit of their choice exuberance, imploring me at the same time to reply by

telegraph. Then, maiden-like, I longed to toy and dally with his love. But Anglo-Indian telegraphic rates are high; so, much against my maiden will, I answered in one word—that one word, yes!

Mat. And ye've engaged yerself to a man whose face ye've niver seen?

Car. I've seen his soul!

Mat. And when d'ye think ye'll see his body?

Car. Alas, never! for (pity me) he is faithless! We corresponded for a year, and then his letters ceased; and now, for eighteen months, no crumb nor crust of comfort has appeased my parched and thirsting soul! Fortunately my solicitor has all his letters.

Mat. Oh, I see. And when does the action come off?

Car. I know not. We have advertised for him right and left. Twenty men of law are on his track, and my brother Bulstrode, an attorney's clerk, carries a writ about him night and day. Thus my heart-springs are laid bare that every dolt may gibe at them—the whole county rings with my mishap—its gloomy details are on every bumpkin's tongue! This—this is my secret. Swear that you will never reveal it!

Mat. Oh! but ye'll get thumping damages when ye *do* find him.

Car. It may be so. The huckstering men of law appraise my heart-wreck at five thousand pounds!

Mat. Well, and I wish ye may get it, dear!

Car. Thank you, oh! thank you for that wish.

Mat. Ye're not goin'?

Car. No; I have come to spend a long, long day. I'm going to take my bonnet off. (*Solemnly.*) Dear Matilda, we have not met for many many years, and I long—I cannot tell you, Matilda, how earnestly I long—to see all your new things!

[*Exeunt together, as* O'Fipp *enters.*

O'Fi. There's an ungrateful daughter to refuse Whipple, and me pinched for money till I can hardly raise an egg for breakfast. But she shan't have Tom Cobb anyhow. I'll see to that! A pretty kettle of fish I'm boiling for myself. When I've sent Tom Cobb about his business, what'll the ongrateful villain do? Why, he'll sue on them bills o' mine, as if I'd never bin the next thing to a father-in-law to him! But that's the way with mean and thankless naturs. Do 'em an injustice and they're never satisfied till they've retaliated!

Enter MATILDA *with letter, and pretending to cry.*

Mat. Papa dear, I've bad news for you.

O'Fi. Bad news? At whose suit?

Mat. It ain't that, dear; it's my Tom.

O'Fi. And what's the scamp been doin' now?

Mat. The scamp's bin dyin'.

O'Fi. Dying? What d'ye mean?

Mat. I mean Tom's dead.

O'Fi. (*looking at her sternly*). Matilda, are ye in earnest, or have ye bin at the eau de Cologne?

Mat. Oh! I'm in earnest. Tom's dead.

O'Fi. Who's killed him?

Mat. Faith, an' he killed himself. He's written to say so. Here's his letter. He encloses yer two bills and app'ints ye his executor.

O'Fi. Ye pain and surproise me more than I can tell ye. Poor Tom! He was a koind and ginerous lad, and I'd hoped to have met these bills under happier circumstances. Well, his executor deals with them now—that's me; and the question is whether, in the interests of Tom's estate, it would be worth while to proceed against the acceptor—that's me again; and, on the whole, I don't recommend it. (*Tears them up.*) Now, tell me all about it; don't cry, my child.

Mat. No, pa. Well, it's loike this—Ben Isaacs was overpressin', and poor Tom was bothered, and thought he'd make an end of himself; and just then he heard that the ould man, that Whipple called Tom Cobb from the loikeness, had just died. So Tom thought he'd make one death do for the two. Sure, he's been economically brought up.

O'Fi. What! Am I to onderstand that Thomas Cobb has been troiflin' with the most sacred feelings of an old soldier's grey-headed ould harr't?

Mat. Well, he's shamming dead, if ye mean that, and he hopes you'll go to the funeral!

O'Fi. (*rises*). Shamming dead, is he! Shamming dead! Let me come across him, and by the blood of the O'Fipps, I'll make him sham dead in rale earnest!

Mat. But, papa dear, the boy's hard pressed!

O'Fi. Don't interrupt an honest burst of feelin' in an old military officer. For months I've looked forward like a simple ould soldier to meetin' those bills, and now I've destroyed them, and deproived meself of a pleasure which might have lasted me the next twenty years! But I'll expose him. It's a croime of

some sort, pretendin' to be dead when ye're not. It's obtainin burial under false pretences, if it's nothing else! What's that?

Mat. (*with paper in her hand*). It's his will! (*Laughing.*)

O'Fi. (*indignantly*). His will!

Mat. Yes; would ye have a gintleman doi without a will?

O'Fi. A gintleman! A beggarly scoundrel! (*Opens it.*) Ha, ha! He leaves ye everything, Matilda! It's duly signed and witnessed, all quite in form! By my soul, I congratulate ye on yer accession to fortune and prosperity!

Mat. It's just done to give colour to his death. Don't be hasty, dear. It's the first time I've been mentioned in a will, and maybe it'll be the last. (*Laughing.*)

O'Fi. (*furious*). Mentioned in a will! It's an outrage—a sacrilege, I tell ye—an insult to a simple ould officer and his deluded gyurl, to mention them in a swindlin' document that's not worth the ink it's written with! This is how I treat it, Matilda. (*Crumpling it up.*) This is how I treat it (*throws it in the fire*); and if that thief, Tom Cobb, was here, I'd crumple him too and send him after it!

Enter WHIPPLE, *breathless and much excited.*

Whi. Oh, Colonel!

O'Fi. Well, sorr?

Whi. Here's news! My old man, the ugly old man who always went by the name of Tom Cobb——

O'Fi. Well, sorr?

Whi. He died last night! Poor ugly old Tom Cobb died last night.

Mat. We know all about it; we knew it half an hour ago.

Whi. Yes, Matilda, but you don't know this: I went to his cottage this morning, and on the bed I found a hasty scrawled note written by the old man just before he died. (COLONEL *becomes interested.*) It contained these words, "Look under the fireplace." I got a crowbar, raised the hearth, and under it I found gold—gold,—silver and bank-notes in profusion! No end of gold—you could roll in it, you could roll in it! And he hasn't a friend or relation in the world!

[COLONEL O'FIPP, *during the last few lines, has hurriedly snatched the will out of the fire, and smoothed it out, unobserved. He produces it with a dignified air.*

Whi. What's that?

O'Fi. This, sorr, is the poor old gintleman's will, in which he leaves everything to my beloved daughter.

Whi. But that's not *old* Tom Cobb's will! That's the will *young* Tom Cobb made in fun just now!

O'Fi. Sorr, old Tom Cobb's dead, and here's a will signed "Tom Cobb." Put that and that together, and what d'ye make of it? [WHIPPLE *falls into a chair amazed.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*The same room in* COLONEL O'FIPP'S *house, but very handsomely furnished. Pictures, busts, etc. Writing materials on one table; sherry and glasses on another.*

MATILDA O'FIPP *discovered working,* WHIPPLE *on a stool at her feet.*

Whi. My darling Matilda, who was it who said the course of true love never did run smooth? Are not our loves true? And could anything be smoother than their course during the last three months?

Mat. No, dear, savin' that when ye proposed for me, papa kicked ye out of the house.

Whi. He did, in the effusion of the moment, and I honour him for it! On his unexpected accession to wealth he naturally looked for a wealthy and well-born son-in-law, and I honour him for it! But the doughty old soldier was open to reason, and when I proved to him that his wealth depended on my secrecy, he admitted his error at once, like a frank old warrior as he is, and I honour him for it!

Mat. Poor Tom! I wonder what's come of him all this while? It's three months since he——

Whi. Died.

Mat. Died, and I've never heard a word from him since.

Whi. Then he can't complain if you've been inconstant.

Mat. 'Deed, and he can't. It's clear a young girl must marry somebody. It's nature.

Enter O'FIPP.

Whi. Of course it is, and if he truly loves you—really and truly loves you as I do, he ought to be delighted when he comes back to find that you've engaged yourself to a gentleman in every way his superior.

O'Fi. Deloighted when he comes back? Divil a bit! By razin that he won't come back any more!

Mat. Won't come back any more?

O'Fi. Not he. Isn't he dead, and haven't we buried him, and paid his debts, and proved his will, and stuck up a tombstone that he'd blush to read. Sure, it'll be in the highest degree ondacent in him to give the lie to a tombstone!

Whi. But Tom never had any tact—and if he *should* be guilty of the indiscretion of turning up——

O'Fi. Well, sorr, if he should, I shall be prepared to admit that I've acted under a misconception. But, sorr, before I yield possession of the estate which has so miraculously come into my hands, I shall satisfy meself beyond all doubt tnat I am not dealin' with an imposthor. Any one who assumes to be the late Tom Cobb will have to establish his identity beyond all manner of doubt. And as I've paid Mr. Ben Isaacs and his other creditors conditionally on his being dead, he may find that difficult, sorr,—he may find that difficult. [*Exit* O'Fipp.

Mat. Well, Tom Cobb may be dead, but when he finds out the use that's been made of his will, he'll not rest in his grave, I'm thinking, that's all!

Whi. But if he *should* return—if Tom Cobb's shade *should* take it into his ghostly head to revisit the scenes of his earthly happiness—promise me that you will treat him with the cold respect due to a disembodied spirit.

Mat. But when d'ye think he'll come?

Whi. Well, between ourselves, I think we may look for his apparition at an early date. Unless the necessaries of life are considerably cheaper in the other world than in this, Tom Cobb's five and twenty pounds must be as shadowy as himself by this time.

Mat. But if he comes to life, who's to kill him again?

Whi. Oh, your papa will have to kill him; it's his turn. Besides, it's a colonel's business to kill people.

Mat. And a doctor's, too.

Whi. Yes, Matilda. But we don't *pay* people to die: they pay us to kill 'em. It's the rule of the profession.

[*Exeunt* Matilda *and* Whipple.

Enter Tom Cobb, *preceded by* Footman. Tom *is very seedy and dirty, and his boots are in holes.*

Footman. If you'll take a seat, sir, I'll tell the Colonel you want to see him. What name shall I say?

Tom (*aside*). If I give him my real name he'll faint. (*Aloud.*) The Duke of Northumberland. (*Aside.*) That'll draw him.

(*Aloud.*) I haven't a card. (FOOTMAN *is incredulous. He is about to go, but returns and removes tray with sherry; then exit.*) Well, nicely the old scoundrel's feathered his nest, upon my word! Real Axminster, satin furniture, ancestors, busts! And this has been going on for three months, and I only heard of it yesterday. Why, he's made me accessory to a forgery, and I'm being advertised for in every paper in the kingdom! Why, it's penal servitude! Who'd think an Irish colonel could be such a scoundrel! Well, you never know when you're safe in this world; upon my soul, you don't. I never met a man in my life whose manner and appearance inspired me with so much confidence.

Enter O'FIPP.

Well, upon my word, Colonel O'Fipp, you're a nice officer, you are! I make a will more by way of a joke than anything else, and you have the face to apply it to the property of a friendless old man who went by my name! Why, it's robbery! it's forgery! and Docket and Tape are offering £50 reward to any one who can give information about me! Now, look here—destroy that will and restore the property, or I'll answer this advertisement this very minute. I will; upon my soul and honour, I will—there!

O'Fi. I believe I have the honour of addressin' the Jook of Northumberland.

Tom. Oh, don't talk nonsense, Colonel; you know me well enough.

O'Fi. Am I to onderstand, sorr, that ye're not the distinguished nobleman you represented yerself to be?

Tom. Oh, haven't I been deceived in you! Oh, Colonel, Colonel! you *have* turned out treacherous; upon my soul, you have!

O'Fi. I'm at a loss to comprehend your meanin', sorr. Will ye oblige me by informing me whom I have the honour of addressin'?

Tom. You've the honour of addressing a miserable, poor devil, who'll be standing alongside of you at the Old Bailey bar in about three weeks, if he's not very much mistaken.

O'Fi. Upon my wurrd, sorr, ye've got the advantage of me.

Tom. Have I? Then I'm the only man that ever did. I don't think Tom Cobb is the sort of man to get any advantage out of Colonel O'Fipp. (COLONEL O'FIPP *falls sobbing into chair.*) What's the matter now?

O'Fi. Ye mentioned the name of Tom Cobb, sorr. I had a dear, dear friend of that name once. He was to have married me daughter, sorr; but he's gone!

Tom. Well, if that's what you're crying for—cheer up, because he's come back again.

O'Fi. (*seizing his hand*). Me dear friend, me very dear friend, if ye can only assure me that poor dear dead and gone Tom Cobb is aloive, me gratitude shall know no bounds! Maybe you're his brother?

Tom. His brother!—get out!

O'Fi. No? I thought ye moight be; I seem to see a loikeness.

Tom. I should think you did!

O'Fi. A distant loikeness, sorr.

Tom. A mere suggestion, I suppose?

O'Fi. A faint shadowy indication of a remote family resemblance; that's all, sorr, I give ye my honour. And now tell me where is he, that I may embrace him.

Tom. Well, he's here; but don't embrace him.

O'Fi. Sorr, d'ye mean to sit there and tell me to me very face that you're me beloved ould friend Tom Cobb?

Tom. Well, if the marks on my linen are to be trusted——

O'Fi. Ah, sorr! beware of jumpin' at conclusions on insufficient grounds. Depend upon it, ye're mistaken, sorr.

Tom. Well, upon my honour, I begin to think I am!

O'Fi. Tom Cobb, sorr, is dead and buried. I had the melancholy satisfaction of following him to his grave—me dear friend, Tim Whipple, accompanied me, and he's at the present moment engaged in comforting my bereaved and inconsolable daughter.

Tom. I'm sure I'm very much obliged to him! Perhaps I could do that better than he?

O'Fi. I think not, sorr. He's doing it very well—very well indeed.

Tom. Now, once for all, Colonel, this won't do. There are plenty of people who know me if you don't. Here's my card —"T. Cobb, 6," in red cotton (*showing mark on pocket-handkerchief*), and I've several other marks of the same character about me, which I shall be happy to show you at a more convenient opportunity.

O'Fi. Sorr, documentary evidence in red cotton isn't worth the cambric it's stitched upon. Ye'll have to find some better proof of yer identity than that.

Enter MATILDA.

Mat. Papa dear, Tim's goin' to take me to the theayter. (*Sees* TOM.) Oh!

Tom. My darlin' Matilda! My beloved Matilda! I'm so, so, *so* glad to see you again, dear! Why, it's three months since we met. (*Kissing and hugging her.*) What a fool I've been to cut myself out of this sort of thing for three months! (*Kisses her.*) How very, very well you're looking! (*Kisses her.*)

Mat. Will ye koindly leave off kissin' me till I've had the pleasure of bein' inthrojuiced to ye?

Tom. Why, you don't mean to tell me *you* don't know me?

Mat. 'Deed, and I don't then. And yet I seem to have seen yer face before?

Tom. 'Deed, and you have, and you've kissed it before.

Mat. I don't rimimber kissin' it.

O'Fi. You observe, sorr. She don't rimimber kissin' it.

Mat. Oh, papa! (*Crying.*)

O'Fi. What's the matter, my dear?

Mat. There's somethin' about him that remoinds me of poor Tom!

O'Fi. There's a faint resemblance; I remarked it meself. (*Wipes his eyes.*)

Tom. Now, Matilda, don't *you* deny me? I've loved you so long in spite of your not having any money, and although you *do* go with the bills, and although you *are* older than I am, don't turn against me now. Oh, you *do* look so pretty! (*Puts his arm round her and kisses her.*)

Enter WHIPPLE. *He seizes* TOM *by the collar and whirls him away from* MATILDA.

Tom (*seizing his hand*). My dear Tim—my very dear Tim—you're the very man I wanted to see! I am most unaffectedly delighted to see you. (*Shaking his hand heartily.*) How well—how remarkably well you're looking, to be sure!

Whi. (*shaking his hand with a great show of welcome*). Yes, uncommonly well—never better. And how have *you* been?

Tom. Very well, but rather dull. I say, I've got into a nice scrape! They're after me—they're advertising for me!

Whi. No!

Tom. Fact! £50 is offered for me! What do you say to that?

Whi. Well, I should close with it.

Tom. Why?

Whi. Because I should think it's a good deal more than you're worth.

Tom. Ha, ha!

Whi. Ha, ha!

Tom. What a fellow you are! Same old Whipple! I say, the Colonel's a cool hand. What d'ye think he says now?

Whi. Nothing worth repeating, I should imagine.

Tom. What a caustic fellow you are! He says I'm dead!

Whi. Oh, he's an Irishman.

Tom. Ha, ha! Oh, that's very good: that's so like you.

Whi. *He's* not dead, Colonel. (*Feeling* TOM'S *pulse.*)

Tom. There, Matilda, you hear that! (*About to embrace her.*)

Whi. What are you about? How dare you embrace that young lady? (*Stopping him.*)

Tom. You said I was alive.

Whi. But, bless my heart, you don't suppose every man alive is privileged to embrace Miss O'Fipp?

Mat. A nice time I'd have of it.

O'Fi. I tell ye, sorr, Tom Cobb is dead and buried.

Whi. Yes, poor Tom, he's dead. (*Wipes his eyes.*)

Tom. But you just said I was alive.

Whi. Yes, old chap, you're alive.

Tom (*puzzled*). I see, your theory is that I'm alive; but I'm not Tom Cobb.

Whi. Yes; that's my theory.

Tom. But I'm like him, ain't I?

Whi. Well, now you mention it, you *are* like him.

Tom. Matilda—once more, I implore you—— (*Seizing her hand.*)

Whi. Matilda, leave the room! (*Takes her to door.*) Sir, misled by a resemblance, which I admit to be striking, you have come here under the impression that you are my departed friend. I can excuse the error; but now that it's been pointed out to you, if ever you attempt to embrace this young lady again, I'll break your leg and set it myself. [*Exit.*

Tom. Colonel O'Fipp, I——

O'Fi. Stop, sorr. If this conversation is to continue, I must be informed whom I have the pleasure of addressing. Up to the present moment we have only learnt who you are *not.* Let us now proceed to ascertain who ye *are.*

Tom. Colonel, I'm in that state of mental confusion, that I declare I don't know who I am. Give me a little breathing

time. When a young man believes he's been Tom Cobb for twenty-five years, and then suddenly finds himself kicked out of Tom Cobb, with nowhere to go to, he *wants* a little breathing time to look about him and find a name to let.

O'Fi. Well, sorr, for the purpose of this interview one name's as good as another. Here's the *Toimes* newspaper. Ye'll find many a good name goin' beggin' in that. Choose yer name. Here's a gintleman who was hanged this mornin'! Would ye like *his* name? He's done with it.

Tom. Don't be unpleasant, Colonel.

O'Fi. Well, put your finger down; take the first that comes. (*Puts* COBB'S *finger on the newspaper at random.*) Here's one—the Bishop of Bath and Wells.

Tom. Nonsense! Who'd take me for a bishop?

O'Fi. Then try again. Mr. and Mrs. German Reed.

Tom. Don't be absurd.

O'Fi. Well, once more. Major-Gineral Arthur Fitzpatrick. What d'ye say to that?

Tom. But I don't look like a major-general.

O'Fi. Well, sorr, and what of that? I don't look like a lieutenant-colonel, do I?

Tom. No, you don't; but a major-general in broken boots!

O'Fi. Sure it's where yer corns have been shootin' through. Ye wouldn't have a major-gineral with corns that couldn't shoot, I suppose?

Tom. No!

O'Fi. Now, sorr, it'll take a mighty deal of argument to pursuade me that you're not Major-Gineral Arthur Fitzpatrick in broken boots. Now, I've the credit of the surrvice at stake, and when I see a major-gineral in broken boots me harrut bleeds for him, and I long to allow him a pound a week, sorr—a pound a week—to keep up his military position.

Tom. A pound a week?

O'Fi. No less, sorr. Now, as long as Major-Gineral Arthur Fitzpatrick chooses to claim a pound a week of me, it's here at his service. But on the onderstanding that he resumes his name and rank, and ceases for ever the dishonourable and unsoldierlike practice of masquerading under a false name. D'ye onderstand me, sorr?

Tom. Yes—I understand you.

O'Fi. Do ye agree?

Tom. I'm so hungry, and seedy, and wretched, that I'd agree to anything. You couldn't oblige me with the first week in advance?

O'Fi. Sorr, it has always been Terence O'Fipp s maxim to pay everything in advance. I'll go and get ye a pound, and ye can amuse yeself by writing out the receipt while I'm gone. (*Going.*)

Tom (*sitting down to write*). Colonel, I don't know whether to be very much obliged to you, or to look upon you as the coolest scamp unhung.

O'Fi. Sorr, take my word for it, ye've every reason to do both. [*Exit* COLONEL O'FIPP.

Tom. Now, that man's commanded a regiment for years—he's enjoyed the unlimited confidence of his sovereign (whoever that may be), and a thousand men have looked up to him with reverence and esteem. And it's been left to me (who am not naturally sharp) to find out that he's an atrocious scoundrel!

Enter Footman, *followed by* MR. EFFINGHAM, MRS. EFFINGHAM, BULSTRODE EFFINGHAM, *and* CAROLINE. COBB *takes up newspaper and sits.*

Foot. The Colonel will be here directly, ma'am.

[*Exit* Footman. *The others pose themselves in a group, as if being photographed:*—MR. EFFINGHAM *seated*, MRS. EFFINGHAM *leaning on his left shoulder*, CAROLINE *seated in a picturesque attitude at her feet, and* BULSTRODE *standing gloomily behind.*

Mrs. Eff. Adolphus, what a sweet spot! A rural paradise, indeed. How balmy, and yet how cheap!

Eff. I am an old, old man, and I have learnt the hollowness of outward splendours. The house is, indeed, well enough, and (it may be) cheap—but, after all, what *is* the house?

Tom (*politely.*) Seventy-five pounds a year, on a three years' agreement, I believe.

Eff. (*not heeding him.*) After all, what *is* the house but the outer husk? Let us rather learn to value the fruit within. The shell, truly, is goodly; but where, oh, where is the kernel?

Tom (*politely*). He will be here in one minute. (*All turn to look at him.*) I beg your pardon. (*They all turn slowly back again.*)

Bul. (*gloomily*). To the soaring soul, fettered by stern destiny to the office stool of an obscure attorney, the contemplation of such a paradise opens a new vista of Life's Possibilities.

Mrs. Eff. My crushed and broken boy!

Bul. In such a home as this I feel I could lay the warp and woof of a Great Life. In the dingy purlieus of Somers Town life has no warp—no woof.

Tom. A kind of shoddy.

All. Sir!

Tom. Nothing—I didn't speak. (*They turn back as before.*) (*Aside.*) Extraordinary family!

Mrs. Eff. If there is one class of young men I detest beyond another, it is the class of young men who see a humorous side to everything.

Car. In the eyes of such a one the doughtiest deeds are the subject of a sneer—the noblest thoughts, the peg on which to hang a parody.

Bul. Go to, sir—go to.

Eff. (*to* Mrs. Eff.). I am an aged man—let me play the peacemaker. Remember, you are not as others are—you are a thing of thought—an abstraction. You must not expect the young man of average tastes to grasp you.

Mrs. Eff. I do *not* expect any young man to grasp *me.*

Tom. And she's right.

Eff. (*rising and approaching* Tom). We pity you, young man, but do not despise you. Read the master thoughts of mighty minds. Withdraw yourself within yourself. Soar. Be abstract. Think long and largely. Study the incomprehensible. Revolve. So will you learn at last to detach yourself from the sordid world, and float, as we float, in thoughts of empyrean purity.

Car. Oh, sir, my father is an aged man, and his words are wise. Be led by him and you will prosper.

Mrs. Eff. The young man is not of those who *can* detach themselves from the sordid world.

Tom. I beg your pardon. The young man is one of those who have detached themselves from the sordid world, so completely that he can't get back again!

Enter Colonel O'Fipp.

O'Fi. Now, if you've got the receipt—— Mrs. Effingham! I'm rejoiced to see ye! Miss Caroline—Bulstrode—Mr. Effingham, my aged friend! Allow me to inthrojuice ye to a very particular friend and ould comrade—Major-General Arthur Fitzpatrick. (Tom *bows.*) Foightin' Fitz we called him.

All. What!

O'Fi. Major-General Arthur Fitzpatrick. (Tom *bows.*)

Mrs. Eff. (*crossing to* Tom). Of the 29th Madras Native Infantry?

Tom (*puzzled*). I have no doubt that was my regiment.

Mrs. Eff. Viper! (CAROLINE *faints in her father's arms.*)

Tom. What!

Mrs. Eff. Viper! Deliberate and systematic viper! (*Goes to* CAROLINE.)

Bul. Poetic fiend in human shape, despair!

Mr. Eff. Blighter of fond and faithful hopes, behold your handiwork!

Tom. Why, what have I done?

O'Fi. (*turning up his sleeves*). Ay, sorr, what have ye done? Answer me that. Gome, Gineral, no evasion, or by the blood of the O'Fipps—— (*Turning up sleeves.*)

[CAROLINE *revives, and* MR. EFFINGHAM *and* BULSTRODE *turn up their sleeves.*

Car. No, no—don't hurt him. I am better now. (*To* BULSTRODE, *who is turning up his sleeves and advancing in a threatening attitude.*) Brother, stand off! (*Throws herself between* TOM *and the others.*) Stand off—father, mother, brother, all! I have loved this man—ay, and I love him still. (*To* TOM.) Arthur—my poet-soldier—by our old vows—by the old poetic fire that burns in *your* heart and kindled mine, tell them—tell *me*—that you can explain everything. (*Falls on her knees to him.*)

Tom. Upon my word, I shouldn't like to undertake to do that. Why, I never saw you before in all my life.

Mrs. Eff. Despair that plea—it cannot serve you, sir. Your letters bind you—we are so advised.

Tom. But it can't be—it's impossible.

Car. Oh, Arthur, I am told by those who understand these things that you have indeed compromised yourself to the extent required by our common law. But you will not—oh, you will *not* compel me to bring our sacred loves into Court. You are a poet—a great, great poet—you will be faithful—you will be true. (*Kneels.*)

Mr. Eff. (*kneels*). Oh, sir, do not compel us to lay bare the workings of her young affections—do not force us to bring her very heartstrings into Court, that ribald minds may play upon them!

Bul. (*gloomily*). To the tune of £5000.

Enter WHIPPLE.

O'Fi. (*brandishing a big stick*). Gineral, do not blight this young lady's harrut. Give her your sacred promise, or by the blood of the O'Fipps (*sees that* TOM *has taken up a chair and*

looks threatening), my son-in-law elect shall teach you your forgotten duty! (*Hands stick to* WHIPPLE, *and retires.*)

Whi. (*brandishing stick*). Yes, sir. Promise at once, or nothing shall prevent me from urging this young lady's natural protector to inflict on you the condign punishment you so richly deserve. (*Hands the stick to* MR. EFFINGHAM, *and retires.*)

Mr. Eff. (*brandishing stick*). You speak nobly, sir. I am an old, old man, but I am yet hale and tough as hickory. I have a brave and stalwart son, and it is to his hand I confide the task of avenging the insult offered to his outraged family! (*Hands the stick to* BULSTRODE.)

Bul. (*gloomily*). What prevents me from flying at his throat? What prevents me from whipping him as I would whip a cur? Tell me, somebody, what is it holds me back?

Car. I will tell you—it is mercy.

Bul. It is! (*Throwing away stick.*) I give you your life!

Mrs. Eff. My lion-hearted boy!

Tom. Do you know that you are labouring under some surprising and unaccountable delusion?

Mrs. Eff. Delusion, sir!

Bul. Delusion! Ha! ha!

Car. (*kneeling*). No, Arthur, no—this is no delusion, for see, I have your letters. (*Feeling for them.*) No, they are with my solicitor.

Bul. They are. I am his clerk, and at my broken-hearted sister's suit, cold calculating man of war, I serve you with this writ!

[BULSTRODE *presents writ, which* CAROLINE, *kneeling at* TOM'S *feet, reaches and hands to him, kissing his hand as she places the writ in it.*

Tom (*looking at writ*). Breach of promise! (*Wildly.*) Don't bring any actions, don't resort to any violent measures. You say I'm engaged to you. I dare say I am. If you said I was engaged to your mother I'd dare say it too. I've no idea who I am, or what I am, or where I am, or what I am saying or doing, but you are very pretty, and you seem fond of me. I've no objection. I think I should rather like it: at least—*I'll try!*

Car. (*flinging herself into his arms*). My poet-soldier, and my minstrel boy!

[MR. EFFINGHAM, BULSTRODE, *and* MRS. EFFINGHAM *group themselves about* CAROLINE *and* TOM.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*A drawing-room, shabbily furnished, in* MR. EFFINGHAM'S *house.* COBB *is discovered smoking a pipe on balcony with* CAROLINE. *The* EFFINGHAM *family is discovered grouped:*—MRS. EFFINGHAM *seated; old* EFFINGHAM *leaning on her chair, with his arm round her neck, and* BULSTRODE *standing moodily behind. As curtain rises* CAROLINE *enters from balcony, and throws herself at her mother's feet.*

Mrs. Eff. Where is your poet-lover, Caroline?

Car. I left him basking on the balcony, in deep communion with his inner self.

Mrs. Eff. Ah, what a priceless destiny is yours, my babe—to live a lifetime in the eternal sunlight of his poet brain!

Car. It is; but you shall share it—father—mother—brother—all! We will all share it, alway! I would not rob you of one ray that emanates from that divine face, for all the wealth of earth!

Mrs. Eff. My unselfish girl!

Bul. How nobly he looks when, sickened with the world, he turns his eyes inward to gaze upon his hidden self!

Mr. Eff. None but Apollo ever looked as he looks then.

Car. Truly. Yet—shall I confess that when I saw him first my idiot heart sank deep within me, because, in the expression of his thoughts, I did *not* recognize Apollo's stamp?

Bul. Fie, Caroline! Would you have a poet carry his muse pick-a-back, for daws to pick at? Fie, Caroline—oh, fie!

Mrs. Eff. Some thoughts are too deep for utterance.

Car. And some too precious. Why should he scatter such gems broadcast? My poet-warrior thinks them to himself.

Bul. He does. It is his weird and warlike way.

Car. He comes. (*Rises.*) His fancy-flight has ended for the nonce. My soldier-minstrel has returned to earth!

TOM *enters from balcony.* CAROLINE *goes to meet him, and brings him forward lovingly. His appearance is somewhat altered. He parts his hair in the centre, and allows it to grow long. He wears a very low lie-down collar in order to look Byronic.* CAROLINE *throws herself at his feet, and* MR. *and*

MRS. EFFINGHAM *cross and group themselves about him.* MRS. EFFINGHAM *kneels,* BULSTRODE *standing moodily behind his mother.*

Mr. Eff. Arthur, ennoble us. Raise us one step towards the Empyrean. Give us a Great Thought!

Bul. From the vast treasures of your poet brain, we beg some spare small change.

Tom. Well, I really don't know; I haven't anything just now.

Car. We are the bees, and you the flower. We beg some honey for our little hives.

Tom (*with a desperate effort to be brilliant*). Talking of bees (*all take out note-books and write down what follows*)—talking of bees, have you ever remarked how the busy little insect avails herself of the sunshine to gather her sweet harvest from—from every opening flower?

Mr. Eff. (*writing*). We have, we have. How true to fact!

Bul. (*writing*). You said "her sweet harvest," I think?

Tom. Her sweet harvest.

Bul. (*writing*). Her sweet harvest. (*All shake their heads and sigh.*)

Tom. Her honey, you know.

Bul. Thank you. (*Sighs. All finish writing and put up their note-books.*)

Mrs. Eff. You are a close student of nature, sir.

Tom. Yes, I do a good deal in that way.

Mrs. Eff. How simple are his words, and yet what priceless pearls of thought lie encased beneath their outer crust!

Tom. Yes, I always wrap them in an outer crust, to keep them from the cold. (*All take out note-books and write this down.*)

Car. (*writing*).

> "He wraps them in an outer crust
> To keep them from the cold!"

And once I sneered at these grand utterances, just as we continually sneer at shapeless clods upon the road, which, on inspection, turn out to be jewelled bracelets of exceeding price!

Tom. Nothing more common. It's the old story. The superficial mind (*all take out books and write*)—the superficial mind looks for cream upon the surface of the milk; but the profound philosopher dives down deep below. (*Aside.*) Much more of this and my mind will give way!

Mrs. Eff. You are a deep thinker, sir. I can fancy Shakespeare to have been such another.

Car. Shakespeare? Shakespeare never said anything like that! How—how do you do it?

Tom. I don't know. It comes. I shut my eyes and it comes. (*All shut their eyes and try.*)

Car. I cannot do it. Ah me! I shall never learn to talk like that.

[MRS. EFFINGHAM *rises, goes to* BULSTRODE, *and leans upon his shoulder.*

Mrs. Eff. Bulstrode, had you had communion with the Major-General in earlier life, he might have helped to shape your destiny to some nobler end.

[MR. EFFINGHAM *crosses behind.* CAROLINE *and* COBB *remain in conversation.*

Bul. No, it might not be. I am fated. Destiny has declared against me. Fettered to the desk of an obscure attorney —forced to imprison my soaring soul within the left-off garments of a father whose figure has but little in common with my own, who can wonder that my life is one protracted misfit?

Mr. Eff. (*rising*). My boy, sneer not at those clothes. They have been worn for many, many years by a very old, but very upright man. Be proud of them. No sordid thought has ever lurked behind that waistcoat. That hat has never yet been doffed to vicious wealth. Those shoes have never yet walked into the parlours of the sinful.

Mrs. Eff. (*embracing him*). I am sure of that, Adolphus,—I am very, very sure of that.

Bul. It may be as you say. I *do* respect these clothes, but not even a father's eloquence can gloze over the damning fact that they are second-hand!

[*Turns up and exit on to balcony, as* MR. *and* MRS. EFFINGHAM *exeunt lovingly.*

Car. A blessing on him. Is he not benevolent?

Tom. Yes, he looks so. Why do benevolent people have such long hair? Do they say to themselves, "I am a benevolent person, so I will let my hair grow, or do they let it grow because they are too benevolent to cut it off?

Car. There are thousands of such questions that appear at every turn to make us marvel at Nature's strange decrees. Let us not pry into these dark secrets. Let us rather enquire whether you have any chance of getting anything to do? (*Rises.*)

Tom. No; there's no opening for major-generals just now.

Car. And yet how nobly you would lead your troops into action, caracolling at their head on a proud Arabian barb, and rousing them to very frenzy by shouting forth martial songs of your own composition! Oh! it would madden them!

Tom. Yes, I think it would! But at present I've only my half-pay—a pound a week—and we can't marry on that.

Car. Why not? It is ten shillings a week each. I am content if you are. Say, Arthur, shall we be made one?

Tom. My dear Caroline, it's nonsense to talk about being made one. (*She takes out her note-book.*) It's my experience that when poor people marry, they're made half a dozen, at least, in no time!

Car. Arthur! (*Shuts up book.*) Well, I must wait and hope. Oh for a war! (COBB *much alarmed.*) A vast, vast, vast war! Oh for the clash of steel-clad foemen! Oh for the deadly cannonade! And loud above the din of battle, I hear my Arthur's voice, as, like a doughty Paladin of old, he cleaves his path where'er the fight is thickest! Oh! I think I see him doing it! [*Exit* CAROLINE.

Tom. Yes. I think I see myself doing it! Poor, dear girl, it's a shame to deceive her, but what can I do in the face of this confounded advertisement, which still appears in all the papers every day! (*Reads.*) "£50 reward will be paid to any one who will give any information concerning the whereabouts of Thomas Cobb, M.R.C.S. Apply to Docket and Tape, 27, Paragon, Somers Town!" For just six months this blighting paragraph has appeared in every paper in London. Every one is talking about it; a Christmas annual has been published, "How we found Tom Cobb," and a farce, called "Tom Cobb found at last," is playing at a principal theatre!

Enter WHIPPLE.

Tom. Whipple, you here?

Whi. Yes, how de do? I'm quite well. So's Matilda.

Tom. That name!

Whi. She's downstairs, with Miss Effingham.

Tom. Downstairs! And does she—don't think I ask from an improper motive—does she ever talk about me? (*Sits.*)

Whi. Never mentions you by any chance. But she often drops a tear to the memory of poor dead-and-gone Tom Cobb.

Tom. Oh! she does *that*, does she? That's rather nasty for you, isn't it?

Whi. Not a bit. (*Sits.*) It does her credit, and I honour her

for it. The poor fellow's dead, and there's an end to him. I loved him as a brother! (*Wiping his eye.*) He did my botany papers for me at the College. But it's no use repining. No power on earth can bring him to life again, now. How she loved that man!

Tom (*half sobbing*). Oh, Matilda! Be good to her, Whipple.

Whi. I will, General; trust me.

Tom. Is she—is she as fond of the theatre as ever?

Whi. Quite. We go every night.

Tom. She used to call it the "theayter."

Whi. (*much moved*). She does still!

Tom. Bless her for it. And does she still like oysters after the play?

Whi. Always. She bargains for 'em—stout and oysters.

Tom. She used to call them "histers."

Whi. She does still.

Tom. Oh, thank you for this news of her. Oh, Whipple, make that woman happy!

Whi. Trust me—I will, for poor dear Tom Cobb's sake. How she loved that man! (*Wipes his eye.*) But this is not business. The Colonel, who is downstairs with Mr. Effingham, begged me to give you this—your weekly screw. Allow me, Major-General. (*Gives him a sovereign.*)

Tom. Thank you. The Colonel is always regular and punctual with my little pension.

Whi. The Colonel is extremely punctilious about money matters. Oh, I quite forgot—he further desires me to say that from this moment he proposes to discontinue your weekly payment.

Tom (*aghast*). What!

Whi. From this moment your little pension dries up.

Tom. Do you mean to tell me that he intends deliberately to break his plighted word?

Whi. That is precisely what I intended to convey.

Tom. And cut off my only source of sustenance?

Whi. Absolutely.

Tom. But hang it, man, don't he know that his liberty and wealth are at my mercy?

Whi. Yes, he knows that; but he's prepared to risk it. You see, General, Messrs. Docket and Tape are looking out for Tom Cobb. Tom Cobb's wanted. I don't know what he's done, but people talk about a forged will. He's advertised for every day. You may have noticed it.

Tom. Yes, I've remarked it.

Whi. Well, if Tom Cobb is alive this advertisement is quite enough to keep him quiet. The Colonel, having this fact strongly before his eyes, considers that as he has no further interest in Major-General Fitzpatrick's existence, he does not see why he should be called upon to contribute to his support.

Tom. But it's ruin! Hang it—it's starvation! Whipple, you used to be a nice man once—ask him to see me—ask him to speak to me for five minutes! By your old niceness, I implore you!

Whi. I can't resist that appeal! I'll ask him, but I'm not sanguine. You see, he's been in the constant practice of breaking his promise for the last sixty-five years, and it's degenerated into a habit. [*Exit* WHIPPLE.

Tom. And I did that man's—— (*Furious.*) But I'll be even with them all. I don't care now. I've nothing to lose, and I'm a desperate man. My mind's made up. I'll write to Docket and Tape, and tell the whole truth! (*Sits down to write.*) Now, Colonel O'Fipp, tremble, and you, Whipple, tremble, and Matilda. (*Throws down pen.*) I would spare Matilda! But no, let *her* tremble too! (*Finishes letter; about to ring bell.*) Now, now, I shall soon know the worst!

Enter BULSTRODE *from balcony.*

Bul. The Major-General seems moody. On what is he thinking? On the sacking of towns, perchance?

Tom. Bulstrode, you're a lawyer's clerk, aren't you?

Bul. Cursed be my lot, I am!

Tom. Do you happen to know Docket and Tape?

Bul. I do!

Tom. Who are they?

Bul. My loathed employers!

Tom. What! Why, then, you know all about this Tom Cobb whom they are advertising for, and whose name is on every tongue?

Bul. I should rather say I did.

Tom (*excited*). A—what is he wanted for?

Bul. Much.

Tom. Yes, but what—what?

Bul. It is a weird tale. Wild horses shouldn't drag it from me.

Tom. But, hang it, you can trust *me*.

Bul. (*takes his hand*). General, I think I can—but I'm sure I won't.

Tom. But why do you object?

Bul. Major-General Fitzpatrick, had you the password of some leaguered town, and an enemy, armed to the teeth, demanded that word at the pistol's mouth, what would you do?

Tom. Tell him at once without a moment's hesitation.

Bul. Then am I made of doughtier stuff. Sir, I hate my employers, I loathe their unholy practices, but—I respect their secrets. Good day; I go to them. [*Exit* BULSTRODE.

Tom. So it seems I've had my head in the lion's mouth for the last three months without knowing it! Well, well—there is a grim justice in the fact that my punishment will be brought about through the employers of the son of the husband of the mother of the young woman to whom I was to have been married.

Enter COLONEL O'FIPP.

O'Fi. Now, sorr, ye've expressed a wish for an audience. On consideration I have resolved to grant it.

Tom. You're very good, Colonel.

O'Fi. You may say that, sorr, for I have discovered that ye're an imposthor. An out and out imposthor, sorr! Ye're no more a gineral officer than I'm a gineral postman.

Tom. But I never said I was. *You* said I was a major-general; and you ought to know. It isn't for me to set up my opinion on a military matter against a lieutenant-colonel's.

O'Fi. Sorr, I'm a soft-hearted, simple ould fool, and at first your military bearing deceived me practised oi, and I was moved to pity by yer plausible tale and yer broken boots. I was touched by yer sorrows, and I was disposed to try and heal them.

Tom. The boots?

O'Fi. The sorrows. Now, sorr, a lie has ever been me scorrn and aversion, and an imposture me deepest abhorrence.

Tom. Colonel, I respect your sentiments, for they are my own. You discontinue my allowance, and you are quite right. Your hand.

O'Fi. (*rather surprised*). Sorr, ye spake like a gintleman. Ye're not a gintleman, but ye spake like one. (*Sees note in* TOM'S *hand.*) What's that?

Tom. It's a letter to Docket and Tape, in which I confess myself to be the Tom Cobb they're advertising for,—and offering to give them all the information in my power.

O'Fi. But ye're niver goin' to send that?

Tom. I'm going to send it directly.

O'Fi. Ye're doin' it to frighten me.

Tom. Frighten a colonel? I wouldn't presume to attempt it!

O'Fi. But—— Oh! ye'll niver sind it—it would ruin ye.

Tom. It'll ruin us all. (*Rings.*)

O'Fi. No, no—they can't touch me, mind that! I'm a simple ould man; it's well known, and aisy done. Don't send that, Tom Cobb, and I'll pay ye the pound a week; damme, I'll double it—treble it! I'm a simple ould soldier, and I'm fond of ye, Tom, and I'll not let ye ruin yeself for me!

Tom. Sir, a lie has ever been my scorn and aversion, and an imposture my deepest abhorrence.

Enter Servant.

Take this to the address at once. [*Exit* Servant.

O'Fi. Effingham—Mrs. Effingham—Matilda—Bulstrode—Whipple—all of ye—come here! (*To* Tom.) Ye've determined to inform on me grey hairs—I'll be first in the field anyhow—mind that now.

Enter all the characters from different doors; Bulstrode *and* Caroline *holding back* Tom, Whipple *and* Matilda *holding back* O'Fipp.

Mrs. Eff. What—what is the clamour?

Mat. Papa, dear, what's he bin doin' to ye?

O'Fi. This man—who has passed himself off as a major-general—he's a swindler—an imposthor—he's deceived us all—he's practised on our inexperience.

Car. Arthur—Arthur—speak—what, oh, what is this?

Mat. Don't call him Arthur—his name's Tom—Tom.

Car. Tomtom? Impossible. Tell them, Arthur, that it is false. Tell them that you are not—you cannot be Tomtom!

O'Fi. His name's Tom Cobb. Tom Cobb, Mr. Bulstrode—and he's a swindlin' apothecary—the man you've been advertising for these six months.

[Caroline *faints in* Mr. *and* Mrs. Effingham's *arms.*

Bul. Amazement!

Mr. Eff. Monster—once more behold your work!

Mrs. Eff. Viper! Creeping, crawling, unadulterated viper!

Tom. I am Tom Cobb, M.R.C.S.; there's my card—"Tom Cobb, 6." (*Producing handkerchief.*) Lead me away.

Bul. This is a day of great events. We have sought you everywhere for six months.

Tom. I know you have. Your advertisement has been the nightmare of my life.

Bul. Amazement! There was a nameless old man, who bore so strong a resemblance to you, that scoffers called him by your name. He died in squalor, barely six months since.

Tom. All is over—lead me away!

Bul. He was supposed to have much money in the house, though not a penny could be found. But besides this untold gold, there was standing in his name a sum amounting to £12,000!

Tom. I know nothing about the £12,000! But I am amenable to the law. Take me to my dungeon!

Bul. No dungeon yawns for you, oh, happy sir. Wealth—wealth waits you open-armed!

All. What!

Bul. You had a father once—that father yet another of his own, the aged man so strangely like yourself. That aged person had a son—that son another son—that son your father, and that other son yourself!

Tom. Then—I am the old man's grandson!

Bul. That is the same idea in vulgar phrase. You are his grandson and his heir-at-law.

Cur. (*reviving*). My poet-surgeon, and my old, old love! (*Embracing him.*)

Mrs. Eff. My son!

Bul. My brother!

Tom. Well, Colonel, I must trouble you to hand over the property. If it's inconvenient——

O'Fi. It is. (*From behind his handkerchief.*)

Tom. Well, I'm sorry, that's all.

O'Fi. Maybe ye're sorry, sorr; but ye're not so sorry as I am, I'll go bail!

Mat. Papa dear, don't fret. Sure, I'm a poor penniless girl now; but ain't I goin' to marry a handsome and ginerous young gintleman of good fortune? (*Leaning on* Tom's *shoulder.*) And won't he be a son to ye, and give ye a home for the rest of yer days?

[Whipple *appears to remonstrate with her.* Caroline *expresses indignation and clings to her mother.*

Tom. But I protest!

O'Fi. Tom Cobb, ye spake like a gintleman. Ye're not a gintleman, but ye spake like one. I accept yer offer with pride and gratitude, my son! (*Seizes his hand.*)

Tom. Get out! (*Shakes him off.*) Whipple, take this young

lady. Matilda, go with the bills! (*Hands her to* WHIPPLE, *who takes her up, expostulating with her.*) Caroline, you loved me as a penniless, but poetical major-general; can you still love me as a wealthy, but unromantic apothecary?

Car. I can! I can love you as a wealthy anything!

Mrs. Eff. We all can!

Bul. All!

[*They group about him,* MR. *and* MRS. EFFINGHAM *on each side,* BULSTRODE *behind, and* CAROLINE *at his feet; the* COLONEL, WHIPPLE, *and* MATILDA *seated at table, with their heads buried in their arms.*

THE SORCERER.

AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL MODERN COMIC OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

First produced at the Opera Comique Theatre, by MR. R. D'OYLY CARTE, *on November* 17, 1877.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR MARMADUKE POINTDEXTRE, *an elderly Baronet.*
ALEXIS, *of the Grenadier Guards—his Son.*
DR. DALY, *Vicar of Ploverleigh.*
JOHN WELLINGTON WELLS, *of J. W. Wells & Co., Family Sorcerers.*
NOTARY.
LADY SANGAZURE, *a Lady of ancient lineage.*
ALINE, *her Daughter—betrothed to* ALEXIS.
MRS. PARTLET, *a Pew-Opener.*
CONSTANCE, *her Daughter.*

Chorus of Peasantry.

ACT I.

GROUNDS OF SIR MARMADUKE'S MANSION.

[*Half an hour is supposed to elapse between Acts I. and II.*]

ACT II.

MARKET-PLACE OF PLOVERLEIGH.

TIME—THE PRESENT DAY.

THE SORCERER.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Garden of Sir Marmaduke's Elizabethan mansion. The end of a large marquee, open, and showing portion of table covered with white cloth, on which are joints of meat, teapots, cups, bread and butter, jam, etc. To the back a raised terrace with steps. A park in the background, with spire of church seen above the trees.*

CHORUS OF PEASANTRY.

Ring forth, ye bells,
With clarion sound—
Forget your knells,
For joys abound.
Forget your notes
Of mournful lay,
And from your throats
Pour joy to-day.

For to-day young Alexis—young Alexis Pointdextre
Is betrothed to Aline—to Aline Sangazure,
And that pride of his sex is—of his sex is to be next her,
At the feast on the green—on the green, oh, be sure!

Ring forth, ye bells, etc.

[*At the end of chorus, exeunt the* Men *into house.*

Enter MRS. PARTLET, *meeting* CONSTANCE, *her daughter.*

RECITATIVE.

Mrs. P. Constance, my daughter, why this strange depression?
The village rings with seasonable joy,
Because the young and amiable Alexis,
Heir to the great Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre,
Is plighted to Aline, the only daughter
Of Annabella, Lady Sangazure.
You, you alone are sad and out of spirits;
What is the reason? Speak, my daughter, speak!

Con. Oh, mother, do not ask! If my complexion
From red to white should change in quick succession—
And then from white to red, oh, take no notice!
If my poor limbs shall tremble with emotion,
Pay no attention, mother—it is nothing!
If long and deep-drawn sighs I chance to utter,
Oh, heed them not, their cause must ne'er be known!

Mrs. P. My child, be candid; think not to deceive
The eagle-eyed pew-opener—you love!

Con. (*aside*). How guessed she that, my heart's most cherished secret?

(*Aloud.*) I *do* love, fondly—madly—hopelessly!

ARIA.—CONSTANCE.

When he is here,
I sigh with pleasure;
When he is gone,
I sigh with grief.
My hopeless fear
No soul can measure;
His love alone
Can give my aching heart relief!
When he is cold,
I weep for sorrow;
When he is kind,
I weep for joy.
My grief untold
Knows no to-morrow.
My woe can find
No hope, no solace, no alloy!

[*At the end of the song,* MRS. PARTLET *silently motions to* Women *to leave them together. Exeunt* Chorus.

Mrs. P. Come, tell me all about it! Do not fear—
I, too, have loved; but that was long ago!
Who is the object of your young affections?

Con. Hush, mother! He is here!

Enter DR. DALY. *He is pensive, and does not see them. He sits on stool.*

Mrs. P. (*amazed*). Our reverend vicar!

Con. Oh, pity me, my heart is almost broken!

Mrs. P. My child, be comforted. To such an union
I shall not offer any opposition.
Take him—he's yours! May you and he be happy!

Con. But, mother dear, he is not yours to give!

Mrs. P. That's true, indeed!

Con. He might object!

Mrs. P. He might.
But come; take heart. I'll probe him on the subject.
Be comforted; leave this affair to me.

RECITATIVE—DR. DALY.

The air is charged with amatory numbers—
Soft madrigals, and dreamy lovers' lays.
Peace, peace, old heart! Why waken from its slumbers
The aching memory of the old, old days?

BALLAD.

Time was when Love and I were well acquainted.
Time was when we walked ever hand in hand,
A saintly youth, with worldly thought untainted—
None better loved than I in all the land!
Time was when maidens of the noblest station,
Forsaking even military men,
Would gaze upon me, rapt in adoration.
Ah me! I was a fair young curate then!

Had I a headache? sighed the maids assembled;
Had I a cold? welled forth the silent tear;
Did I look pale? then half a parish trembled;
And when I coughed all thought the end was near.
I had no care—no jealous doubts hung o'er me;
For I was loved beyond all other men.
Fled gilded dukes and belted earls before me.
Ah me! I was a pale young curate then!

[*At the conclusion of the ballad,* MRS. PARTLET *comes forward with* CONSTANCE.

Mrs. P. Good day, reverend sir.

Dr. D. Ah, good Mrs. Partlet, I am glad to see you. And your little daughter, Constance! Why, she is quite a little woman, I declare!

Con. (*aside*). Oh, mother, I cannot speak to him!

Mrs. P. Yes, reverend sir, she is nearly eighteen, and as good a girl as ever stepped. (*Aside to* DR. D.) Ah, sir, I'm afraid I shall soon lose her!

Dr. D. (*aside to* MRS. P.). Dear me! you pain me very much Is she delicate?

Mrs. P. Oh no, sir; I don't mean that; but young girls look to get married.

Dr. D. Oh, I take you. To be sure. But there's plenty of time for that. Four or five years hence, Mrs. Partlet, four or five years hence. But when the time *does* come, I shall have much pleasure in marrying her myself——

Con. (*aside*). Oh, mother!

Dr. D. To some strapping young fellow in her own rank of life.

Con. (*in tears*). He does *not* love me!

Mrs. P. I have often wondered, reverend sir (if you'll excuse the liberty), that *you* have never married.

Dr. D. (*aside*). Be still, my fluttering heart!

Mrs. P. A clergyman's wife does so much good in a village. Besides that, you are not so young as you were, and before very long you will want somebody to nurse you, and look after your little comforts.

Dr. D. Mrs. Partlet, there is much truth in what you say. I am indeed getting on in years, and a helpmate would cheer my declining days. Time was when it might have been; but I have left it too long. I am an old fogey now, am I not, my dear? (*to Constance*)—a very old fogey, indeed. Ha! ha! No, Mrs. Partlet, my mind is quite made up. I shall live and die a solitary old bachelor.

Con. Oh, mother, mother! (*Sobs on* Mrs. Partlet's *bosom.*)

Mrs. P. Come, come, dear one, don't fret. At a more fitting time we will try again—we will try again.

[*Exeunt* Mrs. Partlet *and* Constance.

Dr. D. (*looking after them*). Poor little girl! I'm afraid she has something on her mind. She is rather comely. Time was when this old heart would have throbbed in double time at the sight of such a fairy form! But tush! I am puling! Here come the young Alexis, with his proud and happy father. Let me dry this tell-tale tear!

Enter Sir Marmaduke *and* Alexis *from house.*

Recitative.

Dr. D. Sir Marmaduke—my dear young friend, Alexis—
On this most happy, most auspicious plighting,
Permit me, as a true old friend, to tender
My best, my very best congratulations!

Sir M. Sir, you are most obleeging!

Alex. Dr. Daly,
My dear old tutor and my valued pastor,
I thank you from the bottom of my heart!

(*Spoken through music.*)

Dr. D. May fortune bless you! may the middle distance
Of your young life be pleasant as the foreground—
The joyous foreground! and, when you have reached it,
May that which now is the far-off horizon,
But which will then become the middle distance,
In fruitful promise be exceeded only
By that which will have opened, in the mean time,
Into a new and glorious horizon!

Sir M. Dear sir, that is an excellent example
Of an old school of stately compliment,
To which I have, through life, been much addicted.
Will you obleege me with a copy of it,
In clerkly manuscript, that I myself
May use it on appropriate occasions?
Dr. D. Sir, you shall have a fairly written copy
Ere Sol has sunk into his western slumbers!

[*Exit* DR. DALY.

Sir M. (*to* ALEXIS, *who is in a reverie*). Come, come, my son—your *fiancée* will be here in five minutes. Rouse yourself to receive her.

Alex. (*rising*). Oh, rapture!

Sir M. Yes, you are a fortunate young fellow, and I will not disguise from you that this union with the house of Sangazure realizes my fondest wishes. Aline is rich, and she comes of a sufficiently old family, for she is the seven thousand and thirty-seventh in direct descent from Helen of Troy. True, there was a blot on the escutcheon of that lady—that affair with Paris—but where is the family, other than my own, in which there is no flaw? You are a lucky fellow, sir—a very lucky fellow!

Alex. Father, I am welling over with limpid joy! No sicklying taint of sorrow overlies the lucid lake of liquid love, upon which, hand in hand, Aline and I are to float into eternity!

Sir M. Alexis, I desire that of your love for this young lady you do not speak so openly. You are always singing ballads in praise of her beauty, and you expect the very menials who wait behind your chair to chorus your ecstasies. It is not delicate.

Alex. Father, a man who loves as I love——

Sir M. Pooh, pooh, sir! fifty years ago I madly loved your future mother-in-law, the Lady Sangazure, and I have reason to believe that she returned my love. But were we guilty of the indelicacy of publicly rushing into each other's arms, exclaiming—

RECITATIVE.

"Oh, my adored one!" "Beloved boy!"
"Ecstatic rapture!" "Unmingled joy!"

which seems to be the modern fashion of love-making? No, it was, "Madam, I trust you are in the enjoyment of good health."—"Sir, you are vastly polite, I protest I am mighty well"—and so forth. Much more delicate—much more respectful. But see—Aline approaches; let us retire, that she

may compose herself for the interesting ceremony in which she is to play so important a part.

[*Exeunt* SIR MARMADUKE *into house.*

Enter ALINE, *preceded by Chorus of* Girls.

CHORUS OF GIRLS.

With heart and with voice
Let us welcome this mating:
To the youth of her choice,
With a heart palpitating,
Comes the lovely Aline!

May their love never cloy!
May their bliss be unbounded!
With a halo of joy
May their lives be surrounded!
Heaven bless our Aline!

RECITATIVE.—ALINE.

My kindly friends, I thank you for this greeting,
And as you wish me every earthly joy,
I trust your wishes may have quick fulfilment!

ARIA.—ALINE.

Oh, happy young heart!
Comes thy young lord a-wooing,
With joy in his eyes,
And pride in his breast.
Make much of thy prize,
For he is the best
That ever came a-suing.
Yet—yet we must part,
Young heart!
Yet—yet we must part.

Oh, merry young heart,
Bright are the days of thy wooing!
But happier far,
The days untried.
No sorrow can mar
When Love has tied
The knot there's no undoing.
Then, never to part,
Young heart!
Then, never to part!

Enter LADY SANGAZURE.

RECITATIVE.—LADY S.

My child, I join in these congratulations.
Heed not the tear that dims this aged eye!
Old memories crowd upon me. Though I sorrow,
'Tis for myself, Aline, and not for thee!

Enter ALEXIS *from house, preceded by Chorus of* MEN.

CHORUS OF MEN AND WOMEN.

With heart and with voice
Let us welcome this mating:
To the maid of his choice,
With a heart palpitating,
Comes Alexis the brave!

SIR MARMADUKE *enters from house.* LADY SANGAZURE *and he exhibit signs of strong emotion at the sight of each other, which they endeavour to repress;* ALEXIS *and* ALINE *rush into each other's arms.*

RECITATIVE.

Alex. Oh, my adored one!
Ali. Beloved boy!
Alex. Ecstatic rapture!
Ali. Unmingled joy!

DUET.—SIR MARMADUKE *and* LADY SANGAZURE.

Sir M. (*with stately courtesy*).
Welcome joy, adieu to sadness!
As Aurora gilds the day,
So those eyes, twin orbs of gladness,
Chase the clouds of care away.
Irresistible incentive
Bids me humbly kiss your hand;
I'm your servant most attentive,
Most attentive to command.

(*Aside, with frantic vehemence.*)
Wild with adoration!
Mad with fascination!
To indulge my lamentation
No occasion do I miss!
Goaded to distraction
By maddening inaction,
I find some satisfaction
In apostrophe like this.

"Sangazure immortal,
Sangazure divine,
Welcome to my portal,
Angel, oh, be mine!"

(*Aloud with much ceremony.*)
Irresistible incentive
Bids me humbly kiss your hand;
I'm your servant most attentive,
Most attentive to command!

Lady S. Sir, I thank you most politely
For your graceful courtesee:
Compliment more true knightly
Never yet was paid to me!
Chivalry is an ingredient
Sadly lacking in our land.
Sir, I am your most obedient,
Most obedient to command!

(*Aside, with great vehemence.*)
Wild with adoration!
Mad with fascination!
To indulge my lamentation
No occasion do I miss!
Goaded to distraction
By maddening inaction,
I find some satisfaction
In apostrophe like this:
"Marmaduke immortal,
Marmaduke divine,
Take me to thy portal,
Loved one, oh, be mine!"

(*Aloud, with much ceremony.*)
Chivalry is an ingredient
Sadly lacking in our land.
Sir, I am your most obedient,
Most obedient to command!

[*During this duet a small table has been placed upon stage, by* MRS. PARTLET. *The* COUNSEL *has entered, and prepares marriage contract behind table.*

RECITATIVE—COUNSEL.

All is prepared for sealing and for signing,
The contract has been drafted as agreed;
Approach the table, oh ye lovers pining,
With hand and seal come execute the deed!

[ALEXIS *and* ALINE *advance and sign,* ALEXIS *supported by* SIR MARMADUKE, ALINE *by her mother.*

CHORUS.

See they sign, without a quiver, it—
Then to seal proceed.
They deliver it—they deliver it
As their act and deed!

Alex. I deliver it—I deliver it
As my act and deed!

Ali. I deliver it—I deliver it
As my act and deed!

CHORUS.

With heart and with voice
Let us welcome this mating:
Leave them here to rejoice,
With true love palpitating—
Alexis the brave,
And the lovely Aline!

[*Exeunt all but* ALEXIS *and* ALINE.

Alex. At last we are alone! My darling, you are now irrevocably betrothed to me. Are you not very, very happy?

Ali. Oh, Alexis, can you doubt it? Do I not love you beyond all on earth, and am I not beloved in return? Is not true love, faithfully given and faithfully returned, the source of every earthly joy?

Alex. Of that there can be no doubt. Oh that the world could be persuaded of the truth of that maxim! Oh that the world would break down the artificial barriers of rank, wealth, education, age, beauty, habits, taste, and temper, and recognize the glorious principle, that in marriage alone is to be found the panacea for every ill!

Ali. Continue to preach that sweet doctrine, and you will succeed, oh, evangel of true happiness!

Alex. I hope so, but as yet the cause progresses but slowly. Still I have made some converts to the principle, that men and women should be coupled in matrimony without distinction of rank. I have lectured on the subject at Mechanics' Institutes, and the mechanics were unanimous in favour of my views. I have preached in workhouses, beershops, and lunatic asylums, and I have been received with enthusiasm. I have addressed navvies on the advantages that would accrue to them if they married wealthy ladies of rank, and not a navvy dissented.

Ali. Noble fellows! And yet there are those who hold that the uneducated classes are not open to argument! And what do the countesses say?

Alex. Why, at present, it can't be denied, the aristocracy hold aloof.

Ali. The working man is the true Intelligence, after all!

Alex. He is a noble creature when he is quite sober. Yes, Aline, true happiness comes of true love, and true love should be independent of external influences. It should live upon itself and by itself—in itself love should live for love alone!

BALLAD.

Alex. Love feeds on many kinds of food, I know.
Some love for rank, and some for duty;
Some give their hearts away for empty show,
And others love for youth and beauty.
To love for money all the world is prone;
Some love themselves, and live all lonely.
Give me the love that loves for love alone;
I love that love—I love it only!

What man for any other joy can thirst,
Whose loving wife adores him duly?
Want, misery, and care may do their worst,
If loving woman loves you truly.
A lover's thoughts are ever with his own;
None truly loved is ever lonely.
Give me the love that loves for love alone;
I love that love—I love it only!

Ali. Oh, Alexis, those are noble principles!

Alex. Yes, Aline, and I am going to take a desperate step in support of them. Have you ever heard of the firm of J. W. Wells and Co., the old-established family sorcerers, in St. Mary Axe?

Ali. I have seen their advertisement.

Alex. They have invented a philtre, which, if report may be believed, is simply infallible. I intend to distribute it through the village, and within half an hour of my doing so, there will not be an adult in the place who will not have learnt the secret of pure and lasting happiness. What do you say to that?

Ali. Well, dear, of course a filter is a very useful thing in a house; quite indispensable in the present state of Thames water; but still I don't quite see that it is the sort of thing that places its possessor on the very pinnacle of earthly joy.

Alex. Aline, you misunderstand me. I didn't say a filter—I said philtre.

Ali. So did I, dear. *I* said a filter.

Alex. No, dear, you said a filter. I don't mean a filter—I mean a philtre,—ph, you know.

Ali. (*alarmed*). You don't mean a love-potion?

Alex. On the contrary—I *do* mean a love-potion.

Ali. Oh, Alexis, I don't think it would be right. I don't indeed. And then—a real magician! Oh, it would be downright wicked.

Alex. Aline, is it, or is it not, a laudable object to steep the whole village up to its lips in love, and to couple them in matrimony, without distinction of age, rank, or fortune?

Ali. Unquestionably, but——

Alex. Then, unpleasant as it must be to have recourse to supernatural aid, I must nevertheless pocket my aversion, in deference to the great and good end I have in view. (*Calling.*) Hercules!

Enter a Page *from tent.*

Page. Yes, sir.

Alex. Is Mr. Wells there?

Page. He's in the tent, sir—refreshing.

Alex. Ask him to be so good as to step this way.

Page. Yes, sir. [*Exit* Page.

Ali. Oh, but, Alexis! A real sorcerer! Oh, I shall be frightened to death!

Alex. I trust my Aline will not yield to fear while the strong right arm of her Alexis is here to protect her.

Ali. It's nonsense, dear, to talk of your protecting me with your strong right arm, in face of the fact that this Family Sorcerer could change me into a guinea-pig before you could turn round.

Alex. He *could* change you into a guinea-pig, no doubt, but it is most unlikely that he would take such liberty. It's a most respectable firm, and I am sure he would never be guilty of so untradesmanlike an act.

Enter Mr. Wells *from tent.*

Mr. W. Good day, sir. [Aline *much terrified.*

Alex. Good day. I believe you are a sorcerer.

Mr. W. Yes, sir, we practise necromancy in all its branches. We've a choice assortment of wishing-caps, divining-rods, amulets, charms, and counter-charms. We can cast you a nativity at a low figure, and we have a horoscope at three and six that we can guarantee. Our Abudah chests, each containing a patent hag who comes out and prophesies disasters, with spring complete, are strongly recommended. Our Aladdin lamps are very chaste, and our prophetic tablets, foretelling

everything—from a change of ministry down to a rise in Turkish stock—are much inquired for. Our penny curse—one of the cheapest things in the trade—is considered infallible. We have some very superior blessings, too, but they're very little asked for. We've only sold one since Christmas—to a gentleman who bought it to send to his mother-in-law—but it turned out that he was afflicted in the head, and it's been returned on our hands. But our sale of penny curses, especially on Saturday nights, is tremendous. We can't turn 'em out fast enough.

SONG.—MR. WELLS.

Oh! my name is John Wellington Wells.
I'm a dealer in magic and spells,
In blessings and curses,
And ever-filled purses,
In prophecies, witches, and knells.

If you want a proud foe to "make tracks"—
If you'd melt a rich uncle in wax—
You've but to look in
On our resident Djinn,
Number seventy, Simmery Axe.

We've a first-class assortment of magic;
And for raising a posthumous shade
With effects that are comic or tragic,
There's no cheaper house in the trade.
Love-philtre—we've quantities of it!
And for knowledge if any one burns,
We keep an extremely small prophet
Who brings us unbounded returns:

Oh! he can prophesy
With a wink *of* his eye,
Peep with security
Into futurity,
Sum up your history,
Clear up a mystery,
Humour proclivity
For a nativity—for a nativity;
Mirrors so magical,
Tetrapods tragical,
Bogies spectacular,
Answers oracular,
Facts astronomical,
Solemn or comical,
And, if you want it, he
Makes a reduction on taking a quantity!

Oh!
If any one anything lacks,

He'll find it all ready in stacks,
If he'll only look in
On the resident Djinn,
Number seventy, Simmery Axe!

He can raise you hosts
Of ghosts,
And that without reflectors;
And creepy things
With wings,
And gaunt and grisly spectres.
He can fill you crowds
Of shrouds,
And horrify you vastly;
He can rack your brains
With chains,
And gibberings grim and ghastly!

Then, if you plan it, he
Changes organity,
With an urbanity
Full of Satanity,
Vexes humanity
With an inanity
Fatal to vanity—
Driving your foes to the verge of insanity!
Barring tautology,
In demonology,
'Lectro-biology,
Mystic nosology,
Spirit philology,
High-class astrology,
Such is his knowledge, ha
Isn't the man to require an apology!

Oh!
My name is John Wellington Wells.
I'm a dealer in magic and spells,
In blessings and curses,
And ever-filled purses,
In prophecies, witches, and knells.

If any one anything lacks,
He'll find it all ready in stacks,
If he'll only look in
On the resident Djinn,
Number seventy, Simmery Axe!

Alex. I have sent for you to consult you on a very important matter. I believe you advertise a Patent Oxy-Hydrogen Love-at-first-sight Philtre?

Mr. W. Sir, it is our leading article. (*Producing a phial.*)

Alex. Now, I want to know if you can confidently guarantee it as possessing all the qualities you claim for it in your advertisement?

Mr. W. Sir, we are not in the habit of puffing our goods. Ours is an old-established house with a large family connection, and every assurance held out in the advertisement is fully realized. (*Hurt.*)

Ali. (*aside*). Oh, Alexis, don't offend him! He'll change us into something dreadful—I know he will!

Alex. I am anxious from purely philanthropical motives to distribute this philtre, secretly, among the inhabitants of this village. I shall of course require a quantity. How do you sell it?

Mr. W. In buying a quantity, sir, we should strongly advise your taking it in the wood, and drawing it off as you happen to want it. We have it in four and a half and nine gallon casks—also in pipes and hogsheads for laying down, and we deduct 10 per cent. for prompt cash.

Ali. Oh, Alexis, surely you don't want to lay any down!

Alex. Aline, the villagers will assemble to carouse in a few minutes. Go and fetch the teapot.

Ali. But, Alexis——

Alex. My dear, you must obey me, if you please. Go and fetch the teapot.

Ali. (*going*). I'm sure Dr. Daly would disapprove it.

[*Exit* ALINE *into tent.*

Alex. And how soon does it take effect?

Mr. W. In half an hour. Whoever drinks of it falls in love, as a matter of course, with the first lady he meets who has also tasted it, and his affection is at once returned. One trial will prove the fact.

Enter ALINE *from tent with large teapot.*

Alex. Good: then, Mr. Wells, I shall feel obliged if you will at once pour as much philtre into this teapot as will suffice to affect the whole village.

Ali. But bless me, Alexis, many of the villagers are married people.

Mr. W. Madam, this philtre is compounded on the strictest principles. On married people it has no effect whatever. But are you quite sure that you have nerve enough to carry you through the fearful ordeal?

Alex. In the good cause I fear nothing.

Mr. W. Very good; then we will proceed at once to the Incantation.

(*The stage grows dark.*)

INCANTATION.

Mr. W. Sprites of earth and air—
Fiends of flame and fire—
Demon souls,
Come here in shoals,
This dreadful deed inspire!
Appear, appear, appear!

Male Voices. Good master, we are here!

Mr. W. Noisome hags of night—
Imps of deadly shade—
Pallid ghosts,
Arise in hosts,
And lend me all your aid!
Appear, appear, appear!

Female Voices. Good master, we are here!

Alex. (*aside*). Hark, they assemble,
These fiends of the night!

All. (*aside*). Oh, Alexis, I tremble.
Seek safety in flight!

ARIA.—ALINE.

Let us fly to a far-off land,
Where peace and plenty dwell—
Where the sigh of the silver strand
Is echoed in every shell.
To the joy that land will give,
On the wings of Love we'll fly;
In innocence there to live—
In innocence there to die!

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

Too late—too late,
It may not be!
That happy fate
Is not for thee!

ALEXIS, ALINE, AND MR. WELLS.

Too late—too late,
That may not be!
That happy fate
Is not for { me! / thee! }

Mr. W. Now, shrivelled hags, with poison bags,
Discharge your loathsome loads!
Spit flame and fire, unholy choir!
Belch forth your venom, toads!

Ye demons fell, with yelp and yell,
Shed curses far afield—
Ye fiends of night, your filthy blight
In noisome plenty yield!

Mr. W. (*pouring phial into teapot—flash*).
Number One!
Chorus. It is done!
Mr. W. (*pouring phial into teapot—flash*).
Number Two!
Chorus. One too few!
Mr. W. (*pouring phial into teapot—flash*).
Number Three!
Chorus. Set us free!
Set us free—our work is done.
Ha! ha! ha!
Set us free—our course is run!
Ha! ha! ha!

ALINE *and* ALEXIS (*aside*).

Let us fly to a far-off land,
Where peace and plenty dwell—
Where the sigh of the silver strand
Is echoed in every shell.

CHORUS OF FIENDS.

Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

[*Stage grows light.* MR. WELLS *beckons villagers.*

Enter villagers and all the dramatis personæ, dancing joyously. SIR MARMADUKE *enters with* LADY SANGAZURE *from house.* VICAR *enters, absorbed in thought. He is followed by* CONSTANCE. COUNSEL *enters, followed by* MRS. PARTLET. MRS. PARTLET *and* MR. WELLS *distribute teacups.*

CHORUS.

Now to the banquet we press;
Now for the eggs, the ham,
Now for the mustard and cress,
Now for the strawberry jam!
Now for the tea of our host,
Now for the rollicking bun,
Now for the muffin and toast,
Now for the gay Sally Lunn!
Women. The eggs, and the ham, and the strawberry jam!
Men. The rollicking bun, and the gay Sally Lunn!
The rollicking, rollicking bun!

RECITATIVE.—SIR MARMADUKE.

Be happy all—the feast is spread before ye,
Fear nothing, but enjoy yourselves, I pray!
Eat, ay, and drink—be merry, I implore ye,
For once let thoughtless Folly rule the day.

TEACUP BRINDISI.

Eat, drink, and be gay,
Banish all worry and sorrow;
Laugh gaily to-day,
Weep, if you're sorry, to-morrow!
Come, pass the cup round—
I will go bail for the liquor;
It's strong, I'll be bound,
For it was brewed by the vicar!

CHORUS.

None so knowing as he
At brewing a jorum of tea,
Ha! ha!
A pretty stiff jorum of tea!

TRIO.—MR. WELLS, ALINE, AND ALEXIS (*aside*).

See—see—they drink—
All thought unheeding;
The teacups clink—
They are exceeding!
Their hearts will melt
In half an hour—
Then will be felt
The potion's power!

[*During this verse* CONSTANCE *has brought a small teapot, kettle, caddy, and cosy to* DR. DALY. *He makes tea scientifically.*

BRINDISI, 2*nd Verse.*—DR. DALY (*with the teapot*).

Pain, trouble, and care,
Misery, heart-ache, and worry,
Quick, out of your lair!
Get you all gone in a hurry!
Toil, sorrow, and plot,
Fly away quicker and quicker—
Three spoons to the pot—
That is the brew of your vicar!

CHORUS.

None so cunning as he
As brewing a jorum of tea,
Ha! ha!
A pretty stiff jorum of tea!

[Dr. Daly *places teapot on tray held by* Constance. *He covers it with the cosy. She takes tray into the house.*

Ensemble.—Alexis and Aline (*aside*).

Oh, love, true love—unworldly, abiding!
Source of all pleasure—true fountain of joy—
Oh, love, true love—divinely confiding,
Exquisite treasure that knows no alloy!
Oh, love, true love, rich harvest of gladness,
Peace-bearing tillage—great garner of bliss—
Oh, love, true love, look down on our sadness—
Dwell in this village—oh, hear us in this!

[*It becomes evident by the strange conduct of the characters that the charm is working. All rub their eyes.*

Tutti (*aside*).

Oh, marvellous illusion!
Oh, terrible surprise!
What is this strange confusion
That veils my aching eyes?
I must regain my senses,
Restoring Reason's law,
Or fearful inferences
The company will draw!

Alexis, Mr. Wells, and Aline (*aside*).

A marvellous illusion—
A terrible surprise
Excites a strange confusion
Within their aching eyes—
They must regain their senses,
Restoring Reason's law,
Or fearful inferences
The company will draw!

[*Those who have partaken of the philtre struggle against its effects, and resume the Brindisi with a violent effort.*

Tutti.

Eat, drink, and be gay,
Banish all worry and sorrow,
Laugh gaily to-day,
Weep, if you're sorry, to-morrow;
Come, pass the cup round—
We will go bail for the liquor;
It's strong, I'll be bound,
For it was brewed by the vicar!
None so cunning as he
At brewing a jorum of tea.
Ha! ha!
At brewing a jorum of tea!

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Market-place in the Village. Rustic houses. In centre a market cross.*

Enter Peasants *dancing, coupled two and two. An old* Man *with a young* Girl. *Then an old* Woman *with a young* Man. *Then other ill-assorted couples.*

OPENING CHORUS.

Happy are we in our loving frivolity,
Happy and jolly as people of quality;
Love is the source of all joy to humanity,
Money, position, and rank are a vanity;
Year after year we've been waiting and tarrying,
Without ever dreaming of loving and marrying.
Though we've been hitherto deaf, dumb, and blind to it,
It's pleasant enough when you've made up your mind to it.

Enter CONSTANCE, *leading* NOTARY.

ARIA.—CONSTANCE.

Dear friends, take pity on my lot,
My cup is not of nectar!
I long have loved—as who would not?—
Our kind and reverend rector.
Long years ago my love began
So sweetly—yet so sadly—
But when I saw this plain old man,
Away my old affection ran—
I found I loved him madly.
Oh!

(*To* NOTARY.) You very, very plain old man,
I love, I love you madly!

Chorus. You very, very plain old man,
She loves, she loves you madly!

Notary. I am a very deaf old man,
And hear you very badly.

Con. I know not why I love him so;
It is enchantment, surely!
He's dry and snuffy, deaf and slow,
Ill-tempered, weak, and poorly!
He's ugly, and absurdly dressed,
And sixty-seven nearly,
He's everything that I detest,
But if the truth must be confessed,
I love him very dearly!

Oh!

(*To* NOTARY.) You're everything that I detest,
But still I love you dearly!

Chorus. You're everything that girls detest,
But still she loves you dearly!

Notary. I caught that line, but for the rest
I did not hear it clearly!

[*During this verse* ALINE *and* ALEXIS *have entered at back, unobserved.*

ALINE AND ALEXIS.

Alex. Oh, joy! oh, joy!
The charm works well,
And all are now united.

Ali. The blind young boy
Obeys the spell,
Their troth they all have plighted!

ENSEMBLE.

ALINE AND ALEXIS.	CONSTANCE.	NOTARY.
Oh, joy! oh, joy!	Oh, bitter joy!	Oh, joy! oh, joy!
The charm works well,	No words can tell	No words can tell
And all are now united.	How my poor heart is blighted!	My state of mind delighted.
The blind young boy	They'll soon employ	They'll soon employ
Obeys the spell,	A marriage bell,	A marriage bell,
Their troth they all have plighted.	To say that we're united.	To say that we're united.
True happiness	I do confess	True happiness
Reigns everywhere,	A sorrow rare	Reigns everywhere,
And dwells with both the sexes,	My humbled spirit vexes,	And dwells with both the sexes,
And all will bless	And none will bless	And all will bless
The thoughtful care	Example rare	Example rare
Of their beloved Alexis!	Of their beloved Alexis!	Of their beloved Alexis!

[*All, except* ALEXIS *and* ALINE, *dance off to symphony.*

Ali. How joyful they all seem in their new-found happiness! The whole village has paired off in the happiest manner. And yet not a match has been made that the hollow world would not consider ill-advised!

Alex. But we are wiser—far wiser—than the world. Observe the good that will become of these ill-assorted unions. The miserly wife will check the reckless expenditure of her too frivolous consort, the wealthy husband will shower innumerable bonnets on his penniless bride, and the young and lively spouse

will cheer the declining days of her aged partner with comic songs unceasing!

Ali. What a delightful prospect for him!

Alex. But one thing remains to be done, that my happiness may be complete. We must drink the philtre ourselves, that I may be assured of your love for ever and ever.

Ali. Oh, Alexis, do you doubt me? Is it necessary that such love as ours should be secured by artificial means? Oh no, no, no!

Alex. My dear Aline, time works terrible changes, and I want to place our love beyond the chance of change.

Ali. Alexis, it is already far beyond that chance. Have faith in me, for my love can never, never change!

Alex. Then you absolutely refuse?

Ali. I do. If you cannot trust me, you have no right to love me—no right to be loved *by* me.

Alex. Enough, Aline; I shall know how to interpret this refusal.

BALLAD.—ALEXIS.

Thou hast the power thy vaunted love
To sanctify, all doubt above,
Despite the gathering shade:
To make that love of thine so sure
That, come what may, it must endure
Till time itself shall fade.
Thy love is but a flower
That fades within the hour!
If such thy love, oh, shame!
Call it by other name—
It is not love!

Thine is the power, and thine alone,
To place me on so proud a throne
That kings might envy me!
A priceless throne of love untold,
More rare than orient pearl and gold.
But no! Thou wouldst be free!
Such love is like the ray
That dies within the day!
If such thy love, oh, shame!
Call it by other name—
It is not love!

Enter Dr. Daly.

Dr. D. (*musing*). It is singular—it is very singular. It has overthrown all my calculations. It is distinctly opposed to the doctrine of averages. I cannot understand it.

Ali. Dear Dr. Daly, what has puzzled you?

Dr. D. My dear, this village has not hitherto been addicted to marrying and giving in marriage. Hitherto the youths of this village have not been enterprising, and the maidens have been distinctly coy. Judge then of my surprise when I tell you that the whole village came to me in a body just now, and implored me to join them in matrimony with as little delay as possible. Even your excellent father has hinted to me that before very long it is not unlikely that he, also, may change his condition.

Ali. Oh, Alexis—do you hear that? Are you not delighted?

Alex. Yes. I confess that a union between your mother and my father would be a happy circumstance indeed. (*Crossing to* Dr. Daly.) My dear sir, the news that you bring us is very gratifying.

Dr. D. Yes—still, in my eyes, it has its melancholy side. This universal marrying recalls the happy days—now, alas! gone for ever—when I myself might have—but tush! I am puling. I am too old to marry—and yet, within the last half-hour, I have greatly yearned for companionship. I never remarked it before, but the young maidens of this village are very comely. So likewise are the middle-aged. Also the elderly. All are comely—and (*with a deep sigh*) all are engaged!

Ali. Here comes your father.

Enter Sir Marmaduke *with* Mrs. Partlet, *arm-in-arm.*

Ali. and Alex. (*aside*). Mrs. Partlet!

Sir M. Dr. Daly, give me joy. Alexis, my dear boy, you will, I am sure, be pleased to hear that my declining days are not unlikely to be solaced by the companionship of this good, virtuous, and amiable woman.

Alex. (*rather taken aback*). My dear father, this is not altogether what I expected. I am certainly taken somewhat by surprise. Still it can hardly be necessary to assure you that any wife of yours is a mother of mine. (*Aside to* Aline.) It is not quite what I could have wished.

Mrs. P. (*crossing to* Alexis). Oh, sir, I entreat your forgive-

ness. I am aware that socially I am not everything that could be desired, nor am I blessed with an abundance of worldly goods, but I can at least confer on your estimable father the great and priceless dowry of a true, tender, and loving heart.

Alex. (*coldly*). I do not question it. After all, a faithful love is the true source of every earthly joy.

Sir M. I knew that my boy would not blame his poor father for acting on the impulse of a heart that has never yet misled him. Zorah is not, perhaps, what the world call beautiful——

Dr. D. Still she is comely—distinctly comely! (*Sighs.*)

Ali. Zorah is very good, and very clean and honest, and quite sober in her habits; and that is worth far more than beauty, dear Sir Marmaduke.

Dr. D. Yes; beauty will fade and perish, but personal cleanliness is practically undying, for it can be renewed whenever it discovers symptoms of decay. My dear Sir Marmaduke, I heartily congratulate you. (*Sighs.*)

QUINTETTE.

ALEXIS, ALINE, SIR MARMADUKE, ZORAH, AND DR. DALY.

Alex. I rejoice that it's decided.
Happy now will be his life,
For my father is provided
With a true and tender wife!

Ensemble. She will tend him, nurse him, mend him,
Air his linen, dry his tears.
Bless the thoughtful fates that send him
Such a wife to soothe his years!

Ali. No young giddy thoughtless maiden,
Full of graces, airs, and jeers—
But a sober widow, laden
With the weight of fifty years!

Sir M. No high-born exacting beauty,
Blazing like a jewelled sun—
But a wife who'll do her duty,
As that duty should be done!

Mrs. P. I'm no saucy minx and giddy—
Hussies such as they abound—
But a clean and tidy widdy,
Well be-known for miles around!

Dr. D. All the village now have mated,
All are happy as can be—
I to live alone am fated:
No one's left to marry me!

Ensemble. She will tend him, etc.

[*Exeunt* Sir Marmaduke *and* Mrs. Partlet, Aline *and* Alexis. Dr. Daly *looks after them sentimentally, then exit with a sigh.* Mr. Wells, *who has overheard part of this Quintette, and who has remained concealed behind the market cross, comes down as they go off.*

Recitative.—Mr. Wells.

Oh, I have wrought much evil with my spells!
An ill I can't undo!
This is too bad of you, J. W. Wells—
What wrong have they done you?
And see—another love-lorn lady comes—
Alas, poor stricken dame!
A gentle pensiveness her life benumbs—
And mine, alone, the blame!
(*Sits at foot of market cross.*)

Lady Sangazure *enters. She is very melancholy.*

Lady S. Alas! ah me! and well-a-day!
I sigh for love, and well I may,
For I am very old and gray.
But stay!
(*Sees* Mr. Wells, *and becomes fascinated by him.*)

Recitative.

Lady S. What is this fairy form I see before me?
Mr. W. Oh, horrible!—she's going to adore me!
This last catastrophe is overpowering!
Lady S. Why do you glare at me with visage lowering?
For pity's sake, recoil not thus from me!
Mr. W. My lady, leave me—this may never be!

Duet.—Lady Sangazure and Mr. Wells.

Mr. W. Hate me! I drop my H's—have through life!
Lady S. Love me! I'll drop them too!
Mr. W. Hate me! I always eat peas with a knife!
Lady S. Love me! I'll eat like you!
Mr. W. Hate me! I spend the day at Rosherville!
Lady S. Love me! that joy I'll share!
Mr. W. Hate me! I often roll down One Tree Hill!
Lady S. Love me! I'll join you there!

Lady S. Love me! my prejudices I will drop!
Mr. W. Hate me! that's not enough!
Lady S. Love me! I'll come and help you in the shop!
Mr. W. Hate me! the life is rough!
Lady S. Love me! my grammar I will all forswear!

Mr. W. Hate me! abjure my lot!
Lady S. Love me! I'll stick sunflowers in my hair!
Mr. W. Hate me! they'll suit you not!

RECITATIVE.—MR. WELLS.

At what I am going to say be not enraged—
I may not love you—for I am engaged!
Lady S. (*horrified*). Engaged!
Mr. W. Engaged!
To a maiden fair,
With bright brown hair,
And a sweet and simple smile,
Who waits for me
By the sounding sea,
On a South Pacific isle.

(*Aside.*) A lie! No maiden waits me there!
Lady S. (*mournfully*). She has bright brown hair;
Mr. W. (*aside*). A lie! No maiden smiles on me!
Lady S. (*mournfully*). By the sounding sea!

ENSEMBLE.

LADY SANGAZURE. MR. WELLS.

Oh, agony, rage, despair! Oh, agony, rage, despair!
The maiden has bright brown hair, Oh, where will this end—oh, where?
And mine is as white as snow! I should like very much to know!
False man, it will be your fault It will certainly be my fault
If I go to my family vault, If she goes to her family vault,
And bury my life-long woe! To bury her life-long woe!

Both. The family vault—the family vault.
It will certainly be {your / my} fault,
If {I go / she goes} to {my / her} family vault,
To bury {my / her} life-long woe!

[*Exit* LADY SANGAZURE, *in great anguish*

RECITATIVE.—MR. WELLS.

Oh, hideous doom—to scatter desolation,
And sow the seeds of sorrow far and wide!
To foster *mésalliances* through the nation,
And drive high-born old dames to suicide!
Shall I subject myself to reprobation
By leaving her in solitude to pine?
No! come what may, I'll make her reparation.
So, aged lady, take me!—I am thine!

[*Exit* MR. WELLS

Enter ALINE.

Ali. This was to have been the happiest day of my life—but I am very far from happy! Alexis insists that I shall taste the philtre—and when I try to persuade him that to do so would be an insult to my pure and lasting love, he tells me that I object because I do not desire that my love for him shall be eternal. Well (*sighing and producing a phial*), I can at least prove to him that in that he is unjust!

RECITATIVE.

Alexis! Doubt me not, my loved one! See,
Thine uttered will is sovereign law to me!
All fear—all thought of ill I cast away!
It is my darling's will, and I obey! (*She drinks the philtre.*)
The fearful deed is done,
My love is near!
I go to meet my own
In trembling fear!
If o'er us aught of ill
Should cast a shade,
It was my darling's will,
And I obeyed!

[*As* ALINE *is going off, she meets* DR. DALY, *entering pensively. He is playing on a flageolet. Under the influence of the spell she at once becomes strangely fascinated by him, and exhibits every symptom of being hopelessly in love with him.*

SONG.—DR. DALY.

Oh, my voice is sad and low,
And with timid step I go—
For with load of love o'erladen
I enquire of every maiden,
"Will you wed me, little lady?
Will you share my cottage shady?"
Little lady answers, "No!
Thank you for your kindly proffer—
Good your heart, and full your coffer;
Yet I must decline your offer—
I'm engaged to So-and-so!"
So-and-so!
So-and-so! (*flageolet*).
She's engaged to So-and-so!
What a rogue young hearts to pillage!
What a worker on Love's tillage!

Every maiden in the village
Is engaged to So-and-so!
So-and-so!
So-and-so! (*flageolet*).
All engaged to So-and-so!

[*At the end of the song* DR. DALY *sees* ALINE, *and, under the influence of the potion, falls in love with her.*

ENSEMBLE.—ALINE AND DR. DALY.

Oh, joyous boon! oh, mad delight!
Oh, sun and moon! oh, day and night!
Rejoice, rejoice with me!
Proclaim our joy, ye birds above—
Ye brooklets, murmur forth our love,
In choral ecstasy:
Ali. Oh, joyous boon!
Dr. D. Oh, mad delight!
Ali. Oh, sun and moon!
Dr. D. Oh, day and night!
Both. Ye birds and brooks and fruitful trees,
With choral joy delight the breeze—
Rejoice, rejoice with me!

Enter ALEXIS.

RECITATIVE.

Alex. (*with rapture*). Aline, my only love, my happiness!
The philtre—you have tasted it?
Ali. (*with confusion*). Yes! Yes!
Alex. Oh, joy, mine, mine for ever and for aye.
[*Embraces her.*
Ali. Alexis, don't do that—you must not!
[DR. DALY *interposes between them.*
Alex. (*amazed.*) Why?

DUET.—ALINE AND DR. DALY.

Ali. Alas! that lovers thus should meet:
Oh, pity, pity me!
Oh, charge me not with cold deceit;
Oh, pity, pity me!
You bade me drink—with trembling awe
I drank, and, by the potion's law,
I loved the very first I saw!
Oh, pity, pity me!

Dr. D. My dear young friend, consoled be—
We pity, pity you.
In this I'm not an agent free—
We pity, pity you.

Some most extraordinary spell
O'er us has cast its magic fell—
The consequence I need not tell.
We pity, pity you.

ENSEMBLE.

Some most extraordinary spell
O'er { us / them } has cast its magic fell—
The consequence { we / they } need not tell.
{ We / They } pity, pity { thee! / me!

Alex. (*furiously*). False one, begone—I spurn thee!
To thy new lover turn thee!
Thy perfidy all men shall know.
Ali. (*wildly*). I could not help it!
Alex. (*calling off*). Come one, come all!
Dr. D. We could not help it!
Alex. (*calling off*). Obey my call!
Ali. (*wildly*). I could not help it!
Alex. (*calling off*). Come, hither, run!
Dr. D. We could not help it!
Alex. (*calling off*). Come, every one!

Enter all the characters except LADY SANGAZURE *and* MR. WELLS.

CHORUS.

Oh, what is the matter, and what is the clatter?
He's glowering at her, and threatens a blow!
Oh, why does he batter the girl he did flatter?
And why does the latter recoil from him so?

RECITATIVE.—ALEXIS.

Prepare for sad surprises—
My love Aline despises!
No thought of sorrow shames her—
Another lover claims her!
Be his, false girl, for better or for worse—
But, ere you leave me, may a lover's curse——

Dr. D. (*coming forward*). Hold! Be just. This poor child drank the philtre at your instance. She hurried off to meet you—but, most unhappily, she met me instead. As you had administered the potion to both of us, the result was inevitable. But fear nothing from me—I will be no man's rival. I shall quit the country at once—and bury my sorrow in the congenial gloom of a colonial bishopric.

Alex. My excellent old friend! (*Taking his hand—then turning to* MR. WELLS, *who has entered with* LADY SANGAZURE.) Oh, Mr. Wells, what, what is to be done?

Mr. W. I do not know—and yet—there is one means by which this spell may be removed.

Alex. Name it—oh, name it!

Mr. W. Or you or I must yield up his life to Ahrimanes. I would rather it were you. I should have no hesitation in sacrificing my own life to spare yours, but we take stock next week, and it would not be fair on the Co.

Alex. True. Well, I am ready!

Ali. No, no—Alexis—it must not be! Mr. Wells, if he must die that all may be restored to their old loves, what is to become of me? I should be left out in the cold, with no love to be restored to!

Mr. W. True—I did not think of that. (*To the others.*) My friends, I appeal to you, and I will leave the decision in your hands.

FINALE.

Mr. W. Or I or he
Must die!
Which shall it be?
Reply!

Sir M. Die thou!
Thou art the cause of all offending!

Lady S. Die thou!
Yield thou to this decree unbending!

All. Die thou!

Mr. W. So be it! I submit! My fate is sealed.
To popular opinion thus I yield! (*Falls.*)
Be happy all—leave me to my despair—
I go—it matters not with whom—or where! (*Gong.*)

[*All quit their present partners, and rejoin their old lovers.* SIR MARMADUKE *leaves* MRS. PARTLET, *and goes to* LADY SANGAZURE. ALINE *leaves* DR. DALY, *and goes to* ALEXIS. DR. DALY *leaves* ALINE, *and goes to* CONSTANCE. NOTARY *leaves* CONSTANCE, *and goes to* MRS. PARTLET. *All the* Chorus *make a corresponding change.*

ALL.

Gentlemen. Oh, my adored one!
Ladies. Unmingled joy!
Gentlemen. Ecstatic rapture!
Ladies. Beloved boy! (*They embrace.*)

Sir M. Come to my mansion, all of you! At least
We'll crown our rapture with another feast.

ENSEMBLE.

SIR MARMADUKE, LADY SANGAZURE, ALEXIS, AND ALINE.

Now to the banquet we press;
Now for the eggs and the ham,
Now for the mustard and cress,
Now for the strawberry jam!
Chorus. Now to the banquet, etc.

DR. DALY, CONSTANCE, NOTARY, AND MRS. PARTLET.

Now for the tea of our host,
Now for the rollicking bun,
Now for the muffin and toast,
Now for the gay Sally Lunn!
Chorus. Now for the tea, etc.

(*General Dance.*)

H.M.S. PINAFORE;

OR,

THE LASS THAT LOVED A SAILOR.

AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL NAUTICAL COMIC OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

First produced at the Opera Comique Theatre, by MR. R. D'OYLY CARTE, *on Saturday, May* 25, 1878.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE RT. HON. SIR JOSEPH PORTER, K.C.B., *First Lord of the Admiralty.*

CAPTAIN CORCORAN, *Commanding H.M.S. Pinafore.*

RALPH RACKSTRAW, *Able Seaman.*

DICK DEADEYE, *Able Seaman.*

BILL BOBSTAY, *Boatswain's Mate.*

BOB BECKET, *Carpenter's Mate.*

TOM TUCKER, *Midshipmite.*

SERGEANT OF MARINES.

JOSEPHINE, *the Captain's Daughter.*

HEBE, *Sir Joseph's First Cousin.*

LITTLE BUTTERCUP, *a Portsmouth Bumboat Woman.*

First Lord's Sisters, his Cousins, his Aunts, Sailors, Marines, etc.

SCENE: QUARTER-DECK OF H.M.S. PINAFORE, OFF PORTSMOUTH.

ACT I.—NOON. ACT II.—NIGHT.

H.M.S. PINAFORE;

OR,

THE LASS THAT LOVED A SAILOR.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Quarter-deck of H.M.S. Pinafore. View of Portsmouth in distance.* Sailors, *led by* BOATSWAIN, *discovered cleaning brasswork, splicing rope, etc.*

CHORUS.

We sail the ocean blue,
And our saucy ship's a beauty;
We're sober men, and true,
And attentive to our duty.
When the balls whistle free o'er the bright blue sea,
We stand to our guns all day;
When at anchor we ride on the Portsmouth tide,
We have plenty of time to play.

Enter LITTLE BUTTERCUP, *with large basket on her arm.*

RECITATIVE.

Hail, men-o'-war's men—safeguards of your nation,
Here is an end, at last, of all privation;
You've got your pay—spare all you can afford
To welcome Little Buttercup on board.

ARIA.

For I'm called Little Buttercup, dear Little Buttercup,
Though I could never tell why,
But still I'm called Buttercup, poor Little Buttercup,
Sweet Little Buttercup, I.
I've snuff, and tobaccy, and excellent jacky;
I've scissors, and watches, and knives;

I've ribbons and laces to set off the faces
Of pretty young sweethearts and wives.
I've treacle and toffee and excellent coffee,
Soft tommy and succulent chops;
I've chickens and conies and pretty polonies,
And excellent peppermint drops.
Then buy of your Buttercup—dear Little Buttercup,
Sailors should never be shy;
So buy of your Buttercup—poor Little Buttercup,
Come, of your Buttercup buy!

Boat. Ay, Little Buttercup—and well called—for you're the rosiest, the roundest, and the reddest beauty in all Spithead.

But. Red, am I? and round—and rosy! Maybe, for I have dissembled well! But hark ye, my merry friend—hast ever thought that beneath a gay and frivolous exterior there may lurk a cankerworm which is slowly but surely eating its way into one's very heart?

Boat. No, my lass, I can't say I've ever thought that.

Enter DICK DEADEYE. *He pushes through* Sailors.

Dick. I have thought it often. (*All recoil from him.*)

But. Yes, you look like it! What's the matter with the man? Isn't he well?

Boat. Don't take no heed of *him;* that's only poor Dick Deadeye.

Dick. I say—it's a beast of a name, ain't it—Dick Deadeye?

But. It's not a nice name.

Dick. I'm ugly too, ain't I?

But. You are certainly plain.

Dick. And I'm three-cornered too, ain't I?

But. You are rather triangular.

Dick. Ha! ha! That's it. I'm ugly, and they hate me for it; for you all hate me, don't you?

Boat. (*crossing*). Well, Dick, we wouldn't go for to hurt any fellow-creature's feelings, but you can't expect a chap with such a name as Dick Deadeye to be a popular character—now, can you?

Dick. No.

Boat. It's asking too much, ain't it?

Dick. It is. From such a face and form as mine the noblest sentiments sound like the black utterances of a depraved imagination. It is human nature—I am resigned.

RECITATIVE.

But. (*looking down hatchway*).
But, tell me—who's the youth whose faltering feet
With difficulty bear him on his course?
Boat. (*crossing*).
That is the smartest lad in all the fleet—
Ralph Rackstraw!
But. Ha! that name! Remorse! remorse!

Enter RALPH *from hatchway.*

MADRIGAL.—RALPH.

The nightingale
Loved the pale moon's bright ray,
And told his tale
In his own melodious way!
He sang "Ah, well-a-day!"

All. He sang "Ah, well-a-day!"

The lowly vale
For the mountain vainly sighed;
To his humble wail
The echoing hills replied.
They sang "Ah, well-a-day!"

All. They sang "Ah, well-a-day!"

RECITATIVE.

I know the value of a kindly chorus,
But choruses yield little consolation,
When we have pain and trouble too before us!
I love—and love, alas, above my station!

But. (*aside*). He loves—and loves a lass above his station
All (*aside*). Yes, yes, the lass is much above his station

BALLAD.—RALPH.

A maiden fair to see,
The pearl of minstrelsy,
A bud of blushing beauty,
For whom proud nobles sigh,
And with each other vie,
To do her menial's duty.

All. To do her menial's duty.

A suitor, lowly born,
With hopeless passion torn,
And poor beyond concealing,

Has dared for her to pine
At whose exalted shrine
A world of wealth is kneeling.

All. A world of wealth is kneeling!

Unlearnèd he in aught
Save that which love has taught.
(For love had been his tutor)
Oh, pity, pity me—
Our captain's daughter she,
And I that lowly suitor!

All. And he that lowly suitor!

[*Exit* LITTLE BUTTERCUP.

Boat. Ah, my poor lad, you've climbed too high: our worthy captain's child won't have nothin' to say to a poor chap like you. Will she, lads?

Dick. No, no, captains' daughters don't marry foremast hands.

All (*recoiling from him*). Shame! shame!

Boat. (*crossing*). Dick Deadeye, them sentiments o' yourn are a disgrace to our common natur'.

Ralph. But it's a strange anomaly, that the daughter of a man who hails from the quarter-deck may not love another who lays out on the fore-yard arm. For a man is but a man, whether he hoists his flag at the maintruck or his slacks on the maindeck.

Dick. Ah, it's a queer world!

Ralph. Dick Deadeye, I have no desire to press hardly on you, but such a revolutionary sentiment is enough to make an honest sailor shudder.

Boat. (*who has gone on poop-deck, returns*). My lads, our gallant captain has come on deck; let us greet him as so brave an officer and so gallant a seaman deserves.

RECITATIVE.

Capt. My gallant crew, good morning.
All (*saluting*). Sir, good morning!
Capt. I hope you're all well.
All (*as before*). Quite well; and you, sir?
Capt. I am reasonable in health, and happy
To meet you all once more.
All (*as before*). You do us proud, sir!

SONG.—CAPTAIN.

Capt. I am the Captain of the Pinafore!
All. And a right good captain, too!

Capt. You're very, very good,
And be it understood
I command a right good crew.
All. We're very, very good,
And be it understood
He commands a right good crew.
Capt. Though related to a peer,
I can hand, reef, and steer,
And ship a selvagee;
I am never known to quail
At the fury of a gale,
And I'm never, never sick at sea!
All. What, never?
Capt. No, never!
All. What, *never*?
Capt. Hardly ever!
All. He's hardly ever sick at sea!
Then give three cheers, and one cheer more,
For the hardy Captain of the Pinafore!

Capt. I do my best to satisfy you all—
All. And with you we're quite content.
Capt. You're exceedingly polite,
And I think it only right
To return the compliment.
All. We're exceedingly polite,
And he thinks it's only right
To return the compliment.
Capt. Bad language or abuse,
I never, never use,
Whatever the emergency;
Though, "bother it," I may
Occasionally say,
I never use a big, big D——
All. What, never?
Capt. No, never!
All. What, *never*?
Capt. Hardly ever!
All. Hardly ever swears a big, big D——
Then give three cheers, and one cheer more,
For the well-bred Captain of the Pinafore!

[*After song exeunt all but* CAPTAIN.

Enter LITTLE BUTTERCUP.

RECITATIVE.

But. Sir, you are sad. The silent eloquence
Of yonder tear that trembles on your eyelash
Proclaims a sorrow far more deep than common;
Confide in me—fear not—I am a mother!
Capt. Yes, Little Buttercup, I'm sad and sorry—

My daughter, Josephine, the fairest flower
That ever blossomed on ancestral timber,
Is sought in marriage by Sir Joseph Porter,
Our Admiralty's First Lord, but for some reason,
She does not seem to tackle kindly to it.

But. (*with emotion*).
Ah, poor Sir Joseph! Ah, I know too well
The anguish of a heart that loves but vainly!
But see, here comes your most attractive daughter.
I go—Farewell! [*Exit.*

Capt. (*looking after her*). A plump and pleasing person!

Enter JOSEPHINE *on poop. She comes down, twining some flowers which she carries in a small basket.*

BALLAD.—JOSEPHINE.

Sorry her lot who loves too well,
Heavy the heart that hopes but vainly,
Sad are the sighs that own the spell
Uttered by eyes that speak too plainly;
Heavy the sorrow that bows the head
When love is alive and hope is dead!
Sad is the hour when sets the sun—
Dark is the night to earth's poor daughters,
When to the ark the wearied one
Flies from the empty waste of waters!
Heavy the sorrow that bows the head
When love is alive and hope is dead!

Capt. My child, I grieve to see that you are a prey to melancholy. You should look your best to-day, for Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., will be here this afternoon to claim your promised hand.

Jos. Ah, father, your words cut me to the quick. I can esteem—reverence—venerate Sir Joseph, for he is a great and good man; but oh, I cannot love him! My heart is already given.

Capt. (*aside*). It is, then, as I feared. (*Aloud.*) Given? And to whom? Not to some gilded lordling?

Jos. No, father—the object of my love is no lordling. Oh, pity me, for he is but a humble sailor on board your own ship!

Capt. Impossible!

Jos. Yes, it is true—too true.

Capt. A common sailor? Oh, fie!

Jos. I blush for the weakness that allows me to cherish such a passion. I hate myself when I think of the depth to which I have stooped in permitting myself to think tenderly of

one so ignobly born, but I love him! I love him! I love him! (*Weeps.*)

Capt. Come, my child, let us talk this over. In a matter of the heart I would not coerce my daughter—I attach but little value to rank or wealth, but the line must be drawn somewhere. A man in that station may be brave and worthy, but at every step he would commit solecisms that society would never pardon.

Jos. Oh, I have thought of this night and day. But fear not, father. I have a heart, and therefore I love; but I am your daughter, and therefore I am proud. Though I carry my love with me to the tomb, he shall never, never know it.

Capt. You *are* my daughter, after all. But see, Sir Joseph's barge approaches, manned by twelve trusty oarsmen and accompanied by the admiring crowd of female relatives that attend him wherever he goes. Retire, my daughter, to your cabin—take this, his photograph, with you—it may help to bring you to a more reasonable frame of mind.

Jos. My own thoughtful father. [*Exit* JOSEPHINE.

BARCAROLLE (*without.*)

Over the bright blue sea
Comes Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B.,
Wherever he may go
Bang-bang the loud nine-pounders go!
Shout o'er the bright blue sea
For Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B.

[*During this the* Crew *have entered on tiptoe, listening attentively to the song.*

CHORUS OF SAILORS.

We sail the ocean blue,
And our saucy ship's a beauty;
We're sober men, and true,
And attentive to our duty.
We're smart and sober men,
And quite devoid of fe-ar,
In all the Royal N.
None are so smart as we are.

Enter SIR JOSEPH'S Female Relatives. *They dance round stage.*

Rel. Gaily tripping,
Lightly skipping,
Flock the maidens to the shipping.

Sail. Flags and guns and pennants dipping
All the ladies love the shipping.

Rel. Sailors sprightly
Always rightly
Welcome ladies so politely.

Sail. Ladies who can smile so brightly,
Sailors welcome most politely.

Enter SIR JOSEPH *with* COUSIN HEBE.

Capt. (*from poop*). Now give three cheers, I'll lead the way.
All. Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah! hurray! (*Repeat.*)

SONG.—SIR JOSEPH.

I am the monarch of the sea,
The Ruler of the Queen's Navee,
Whose praise Great Britain loudly chants.
Cousin H. And we are his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts!
Rel. And we are his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts!
Sir J. When at anchor here I ride,
My bosom swells with pride,
And I snap my fingers at a foeman's taunts.
Cousin H. And so do his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts!
All. And so do his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts!
Sir J. But when the breezes blow,
I generally go below,
And seek the seclusion that a cabin grants!
Cousin H. And so do his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts!
All. And so do his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts!
His sisters and his cousins,
Whom he reckons up by dozens,
And his aunts!

SONG.—SIR JOSEPH.

When I was a lad I served a term
As office boy to an attorney's firm.
I cleaned the windows and I swept the floor,
And I polished up the handle of the big front door.
I polished up that handle so carefullee
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!
CHORUS.—He polished, etc.

As office boy I made such a mark
That they gave me the post of a junior clerk.
I served the writs with a smile so bland,
And I copied all the letters in a big round hand—
I copied all the letters in a hand so free,
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee.
CHORUS.—He copied, etc.

In serving writs I made such a name
That an articled clerk I soon became;
I wore clean collars and a brand-new suit
For the pass examination at the Institute.
And that pass examination did so well for me,
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!
CHORUS.—And that pass examination, etc.

Of legal knowledge I acquired such a grip
That they took me into the partnership,
And that junior partnership, I ween,
Was the only ship that I ever had seen.
But that kind of ship so suited me,
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen's Navee.
CHORUS.—But that kind, etc.

I grew so rich that I was sent
By a pocket borough into Parliament.
I always voted at my party's call,
And I never thought of thinking for myself at all.
I thought so little, they rewarded me
By making me the Ruler of the Queen's Navee!
CHORUS.—He thought so little, etc.

Now, landsmen all, whoever you may be,
If you want to rise to the top of the tree,
If your soul isn't fettered to an office stool,
Be careful to be guided by this golden rule—
Stick close to your desk and never go to sea,
And you all may be Rulers of the Queen's Navee!
CHORUS.—Stick close, etc.

Sir J. You've a remarkably fine crew, Captain Corcoran.

Capt. It *is* a fine crew, Sir Joseph.

Sir J. (*examining a very small midshipman*). A British sailor is a splendid fellow, Captain Corcoran.

Capt. A splendid fellow indeed, Sir Joseph.

Sir J. I hope you treat your crew kindly, Captain Corcoran.

Capt. Indeed, I hope so, Sir Joseph.

Sir J. Never forget that they are the bulwarks of England's greatness, Captain Corcoran.

Capt. So I have always considered them, Sir Joseph.

Sir J. No bullying, I trust—no strong language of any kind, eh?

Capt. Oh, never, Sir Joseph.

Sir J. What, *never?*

Capt. Hardly ever, Sir Joseph. They are an excellent crew, and do their work thoroughly without it.

Sir J. (*reproving*). Don't patronize them, sir—pray, don't patronize them.

Capt. Certainly not, Sir Joseph.

Sir J. That you are their captain is an accident of birth. I cannot permit these noble fellows to be patronized because an accident of birth has placed you above them and them below you.

Capt. I am the last person to insult a British sailor, Sir Joseph.

Sir J. You are the last person who did, Captain Corcoran. Desire that splendid seaman to step forward.

Capt. Ralph Rackstraw, come here.

Sir J. (*sternly*). If what?

Capt. I beg your pardon——

Sir J. If you *please*.

Capt. Oh yes, of course. If you *please*. [RALPH *steps forward*.

Sir J. You're a remarkably fine fellow.

Ralph. Yes, your honour.

Sir J. And a first-rate seaman, I'll be bound.

Ralph. There's not a smarter topman in the navy, your honour, though I say it who shouldn't.

Sir J. Not at all. Proper self-respect, nothing more. Can you dance a hornpipe?

Ralph. No, your honour.

Sir J. That's a pity: all sailors should dance hornpipes. I will teach you one this evening, after dinner. Now, tell me—don't be afraid—how does your captain treat you, eh?

Ralph. A better captain don't walk the deck, your honour.

All. Hear!

Sir J. Good. I like to hear you speak well of your commanding officer; I dare say he don't deserve it, but still it does you credit. Can you sing?

Ralph. I can hum a little, your honour.

Sir J. Then hum this at your leisure. (*Giving him MS. music.*) It is a song that I have composed for the use of the Royal Navy. It is designed to encourage independence of thought and action in the lower branches of the service, and to teach the principle that a British sailor is any man's equal, excepting mine. Now, Captain Corcoran, a word with you in your cabin, on a tender and sentimental subject.

Capt. Ay, ay, Sir Joseph. Boatswain, in commemoration of this joyous occupation, see that extra grog is served out to the ship's company at one bell.

Boat. Beg pardon. If what, your honour?

Capt. If what? I don't think I understand you.

Boat. If you *please*, your honour.

Capt. What!
Sir J. The gentleman is quite right. If you *please.*
Capt. (*stamping his foot impatiently*). If you *please!*

Sir J. For I hold that on the seas
The expression, "If you please,"
A particularly gentlemanly tone implants.
Cousin H. And so do his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts!
All. And so do his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts!

[*Exeunt* CAPTAIN *and* SIR JOSEPH *into cabin.*

Boat. Ah! Sir Joseph's a true gentleman: courteous and considerate to the very humblest.

Ralph. True, Boatswain; but we are not the very humblest. Sir Joseph has explained our true position to us. As he says, a British seaman is any man's equal excepting his; and if Sir Joseph says that, is it not our duty to believe him?

All. Well spoke! well spoke!

Dick. You're on a wrong tack, and so is he. He means well, but he don't know. When people have to obey other people's orders, equality's out of the question.

All (*recoiling*). Horrible! horrible!

Boat. Dick Deadeye, if you go for to infuriate this here ship's company too far, I won't answer for being able to hold 'em in. I'm shocked! that's what I am—shocked!

Ralph (*coming forward*). Messmates, my mind's made up. I'll speak to the captain's daughter, and tell her, like an honest man, of the honest love I have for her.

All. Hurrah!

Ralph. Is not my love as good as another's? Is not my heart as true as another's? Have I not hands and eyes and ears and limbs like another?

All. Ay, ay.

Ralph. True, I lack birth——

Boat. You've a berth on board this very ship.

Ralph. Well said—I had forgotten that. Messmates, what do you say? do you approve my determination?

All. We do.

Dick. I don't.

Boat. What is to be done with this here hopeless chap? Let us sing him the song that Sir Joseph has kindly composed for us. Perhaps it will bring this here miserable creetur to a proper state of mind.

GLEE.—RALPH, BOATSWAIN, BOATSWAIN'S MATE, AND CHORUS.

A British tar is a soaring soul,
As free as a mountain bird!
His energetic fist should be ready to resist
A dictatorial word.
His nose should pant and his lip should curl,
His cheeks should flame and his brow should furl,
His bosom should heave and his heart should glow,
And his fist be ever ready for a knock-down blow.
CHORUS.—His nose should pant, etc.

His eyes should flash with an inborn fire,
His brow with scorn be wrung;
He never should bow down to a domineering frown,
Or the tang of a tyrant tongue.
His foot should stamp and his throat should growl,
His hair should twirl and his face should scowl,
His eyes should flash and his breast protrude,
And this should be his customary attitude! (*Pose.*)
CHORUS.—His foot should stamp, etc.

[*All strike attitude and then dance off to hornpipe down hatchway, excepting* RALPH, *who remains, leaning pensively against bulwark.*

Enter JOSEPHINE *from cabin.*

Jos. It is useless—Sir Joseph's attentions nauseate me. I know that he is a truly great and good man, but to me he seems tedious, fretful, and dictatorial. Yet his must be a mind of no common order, or he would not dare to teach my dear father to dance a hornpipe on the cabin table. (*Sees* RALPH.) Ralph Rackstraw! (*Overcome by emotion.*)

Ralph. Ay, lady—no other than poor Ralph Rackstraw!

Jos. (*aside*). How my head beats! (*Aloud.*) And why poor, Ralph?

Ralph. I am poor in the essence of happiness, lady—rich only in never-ending unrest. In me there meet a combination of antithetical elements which are at eternal war with one another. Driven hither by objective influences—thither by subjective emotions—wafted one moment into blazing day by mocking hope—plunged the next into the Cimmerian darkness of tangible despair, I am but a living ganglion of irreconcilable antagonisms. I hope I make myself clear, lady?

Joss. Perfectly. (*Aside.*) His simple eloquence goes to my heart. Oh, if I dared—but no, the thought is madness!

(*Aloud.*) Dismiss these foolish fancies, they torture you but needlessly. Come, make one effort.

Ralph (*aside*). I will—one. (*Aloud.*) Josephine!

Jos. (*indignantly*). Sir!

Ralph. Ay, even though Jove's armoury were launched at the head of the audacious mortal whose lips, unhallowed by relationship, dared to breathe that precious word, yet would I breathe it once, and then perchance be silent evermore. Josephine, in one brief breath I will concentrate the hopes, the doubts, the anxious fears of six weary months. Josephine, I am a British sailor, and I love you!

Jos. Sir, this audacity! (*Aside.*) Oh, my heart, my heart! (*Aloud.*) This unwarrantable presumption on the part of a common sailor! (*Aside.*) Common! oh, the irony of the word! (*Aloud.*) Oh, sir, you forget the disparity in our ranks.

Ralph. I forget nothing, haughty lady. I love you desperately, my life is in thy hand—I lay it at your feet! Give me hope, and what I lack in education and polite accomplishments, that I will endeavour to acquire. Drive me to despair, and in death alone I shall look for consolation. I am proud, and cannot stoop to implore. I have spoken, and I wait your word!

Jos. You shall not wait long. Your proffered love I haughtily reject. Go, sir, and learn to cast your eyes on some village maiden in your own poor rank—they should be lowered before your captain's daughter!

DUET.—JOSEPHINE AND RALPH.

Jos. (*Aside.*)
Refrain, audacious tar,
Your suit from pressing,
Remember what you are,
And whom addressing!
Proud lords to seek my hand
In throngs assemble,
The loftiest in the land
Bow down and tremble!
I'd laugh my rank to scorn
In union holy,
Were he more highly born
Or I more lowly!

Ralph.
Proud lady, have your way
Unfeeling beauty!
You speak and I obey,
It is my duty!
I am the lowliest tar
That sails the water.

And you, proud maiden, are
My captain's daughter!
(*Aside.*) My heart with anguish torn
Bows down before her,
She laughs my love to scorn,
Yet I adore her.

[*Repeat refrain ensemble, then exit* JOSEPHINE *into cabin.*

RECITATIVE.—RALPH.

Can I survive this overbearing
Or live a life of mad despairing,
My proffered love despised, rejected?
No, no, it's not to be expected!
(*Calling off.*) Messmates, ahoy!
Come here! Come here!

Enter Sailors, HEBE, *and* Relatives.

All. Ay, ay, my boy,
What cheer, what cheer?
Now tell us, pray,
Without delay,
What does she say—
What cheer, what cheer?

Ralph (*to* COUSIN HEBE).
The maiden treats my suit with scorn,
Rejects my humble love, my lady;
She says I am ignobly born,
And cuts my hopes adrift, my lady.

All. Oh, cruel one!
Dick. She spurns your suit? Oho! Oho!
I told you so, I told you so.
Sail. and Rel. Shall { we / they } submit? Are { we / they } but slaves?
Love comes alike to high and low—
Britannia's sailors rule the waves,
And shall they stoop to insult? No!
Dick. You must submit, you are but slaves;
A lady she! Oho! Oho!
You lowly toilers of the waves,
She spurns you all—I told you so! (*Goes off.*)

Ralph (*drawing a pistol*).
My friends, my leave of life I'm taking,
For oh, for oh, my heart is breaking.
When I am gone, oh, prithee tell
The maid that, as I died, I loved her well! (*Loading it.*)
All (*turning away, weeping*).
Of life, alas! his leave he's taking,
For, ah! his faithful heart is breaking.

When he is gone we'll surely tell
The maid that, as he died, he loved her well.

(*During chorus he has loaded pistol.*)

Ralph. Be warned, my messmates all
Who love in rank above you—
For Josephine I fall!

(*Puts pistol to his head. All the sailors stop their ears.*)

Enter JOSEPHINE.

Jos. Ah! stay your hand! I love you!
All. Ah! stay your hand—she loves you!
Ralph (*incredulously*). Loves me?
Jos. Loves you!
All. Yes, yes—ah, yes—she loves you!

ENSEMBLE.

SAILORS AND RELATIVES, AND JOSEPHINE.

Oh, joy! oh, rapture unforeseen!
For now the sky is all serene;
The god of day—the orb of love,
Has hung his ensign high above,
The sky is all a-blaze.
With wooing words and loving song,
We'll chase the lagging hours along.
And if { I find / we find } the maiden coy,
{ I'll / We'll } murmur forth decorous joy
In dreamy roundelays!

DICK DEADEYE.

He thinks he's won his Josephine,
But though the sky is now serene,
A frowning thunderbolt above
May end their ill-assorted love
Which now is all a-blaze.
Our captain, ere the day is gone,
Will be extremely down upon
The wicked men who art employ
To make his Josephine his coy
In many various ways.

Jos. This very night,
Hebe. With bated breath
Ralph And muffled oar—
Jos. Without a light,
Hebe. As still as death,
Ralph. We'll steal ashore.

Jos. A clergyman
Ralph. Shall make us one
Boat. At half-past ten,
Jos. And then we can
Ralph. Return, for none
Boat. Can part us then!
All. This very night, etc.

(DICK *appears at hatchway.*)

Dick. Forbear, nor carry out the scheme you've planned,
She is a lady—you a foremast hand!
Remember, she's your gallant captain's daughter,
And you the meanest slave that crawls the water
All. Back, vermin, back,
Nor mock us!
Back, vermin, back,
You shock us!
Let's give three cheers for the sailor's bride
Who casts all thought of rank aside—
Who gives up house and fortune too
For the honest love of a sailor true!
For a British tar is a soaring soul
As free as a mountain bird!
His energetic fist should be ready to resist
A dictatorial word!
His foot should stamp and his throat should growl,
His hair should twirl and his face should scowl,
His eyes should flash and his breast protrude,
And this should be his customary attitude. (*Pose.*)

(*General Dance.*)

ACT II.

Same Scene. Night. Moonlight.

CAPTAIN *discovered singing on poop-deck, and accompanying himself on a mandolin.* LITTLE BUTTERCUP *seated on quarter-deck, near gun, gazing sentimentally at him.*

SONG.—CAPTAIN.

Fair moon, to thee I sing,
Bright regent of the heavens;
Say, why is everything
Either at sixes or at sevens?
I have lived hitherto
Free from breath of slander,

Beloved by all my crew—
A really popular commander.
But now my kindly crew rebel;
My daughter to a tar is partial;
Sir Joseph storms, and, sad to tell,
He threatens a court martial!
Fair moon, to thee I sing,
Bright regent of the heavens;
Say, why is everything
Either at sixes or at sevens?

But. How sweetly he carols forth his melody to the unconscious moon! Of whom is he thinking? Of some high-born beauty? It may be! (*Sighing.*) Who is poor Little Buttercup that she should expect his glance to fall on one so lowly! And yet if he knew——

[CAPTAIN *has come down from poop-deck.*

Capt. Ah! Little Buttercup, still on board? That is not quite right, little one. It would have been more respectable to have gone on shore at dusk.

But. True, dear Captain—but the recollection of your sad pale face seemed to chain me to the ship. I would fain see you smile before I go.

Capt. Ah! Little Buttercup, I fear it will be long before I recover my accustomed cheerfulness, for misfortunes crowd upon me, and all my old friends seem to have turned against me!

But. Oh no—do not say "all," dear Captain. That were unjust to one, at least.

Capt. True, for you are staunch to me. (*Aside.*) If ever I gave my heart again, methinks it would be to such a one as this! (*Aloud.*) I am deeply touched by your innocent regard for me, and were we differently situated, I think I could have returned it. But as it is, I fear I can never be more to you than a friend.

But. (*change of manner*). I understand! You hold aloof from me because you are rich and lofty—and I, poor and lowly. But take care! The poor bumboat woman has gipsy blood in her veins, and she can read destinies. There is a change in store for you!

Capt. A change!

But. Ay—be prepared!

DUET.—LITTLE BUTTERCUP AND CAPTAIN.

But. Things are seldom what they seem:
Skim milk masquerades as cream;

Highlows pass as patent leathers;
Jackdaws strut in peacocks' feathers.

Capt. (*puzzled*). Very true,
So they do.

But. Black sheep dwell in every fold
All that glitters is not gold;
Storks turn out to be but logs;
Bulls are but inflated frogs.

Capt. (*puzzled*). So they be,
Frequentlee.

But. Drops the wind and stops the mill;
Turbot is ambitious brill;
Gild the farthing if you will,
But it is a farthing still.

Capt. (*puzzled*). Yes, I know
That is so.
Though to catch your drift I'm striving,
It is shady—it is shady;
I don't see at what you're driving,
Mystic lady—mystic lady,

(*Aside.*) Stern conviction's o'er me stealing,
That the mystic lady's dealing
In oracular revealing.

But. (*aside*). Stern conviction's o'er him stealing,
That the mystic lady's dealing
In oracular revealing.

Both. Yes, I know
That is so!

Capt. Though I'm anything but clever,
I could talk like that for ever:
Once a cat was killed by care;
Only brave deserve the fair.

But. Very true,
So they do.

Capt. Wink is often good as nod;
Spoils the child who spares the rod;
Thirsty lambs run foxy dangers;
Dogs are found in many mangers.

But. Frequentlee,
I agree.

Capt. Paw of cat the chestnut snatches;
Worn-out garments show new patches;
Only count the chick that hatches;
Men are grown up catchy-catchies.

But. Yes, I know
That is so.

(*Aside.*) Though to catch my drift he's striving,
I'll dissemble—I'll dissemble;
When he sees at what I'm driving,
Let him tremble—let him tremble!

ENSEMBLE.

Though a mystic tone { I / you } borrow,
{ I shall / You will } learn the truth with sorrow,
Here to-day and gone to-morrow;
Yes, I know
That is so!

[*At the end exit* LITTLE BUTTERCUP, *melo-dramatically.*

Capt. Incomprehensible as her utterances are, I nevertheless feel that they are dictated by a sincere regard for me. But to what new misery is she referring? Time alone can tell!

Enter SIR JOSEPH.

Sir J. Captain Corcoran, I am much disappointed with your daughter. In fact, I don't think she will do.

Capt. She won't do, Sir Joseph!

Sir J. I'm afraid not. The fact is, that although I have urged my suit with as much eloquence as is consistent with an official utterance, I have done so hitherto without success. How do you account for this?

Capt. Really, Sir Joseph, I hardly know. Josephine is, of course, sensible of your condescension.

Sir J. She naturally would be.

Capt. But perhaps your exalted rank dazzles her.

Sir J. You think it does?

Capt. I can hardly say; but she is a modest girl, and her social position is far below your own. It may be that she feels she is not worthy of you.

Sir J. That is really a very sensible suggestion, and displays more knowledge of human nature than I had given you credit for.

Capt. See, she comes. If your lordship would kindly reason with her, and assure her, officially, that it is a standing rule at the Admiralty that love levels all ranks, her respect for an official utterance might induce her to look upon your offer in its proper light.

Sir J. It is not unlikely. I will adopt your suggestion. But soft, she is here. Let us withdraw, and watch our opportunity.

Enter JOSEPHINE *from cabin.* SIR JOSEPH *retires up and watches her.*

SCENA.—JOSEPHINE.

The hours creep on apace,
My guilty heart is quaking!
Oh that I might retract
The step that I am taking.
Its folly it were easy to be showing,
What I am giving up and whither going.

On the one hand, papa's luxurious home,
Hung with ancestral armour and old brasses,
Carved oak and tapestry from distant Rome,
Rare "blue and white" Venetian finger-glasses,
Rich Oriental rugs, luxurious sofa pillows,
And everything that isn't old, from Gillow's.
And on the other, a dark dingy room
In some back street, with stuffy children crying,
Where organs yell, and clacking housewives fume,
And clothes are hanging out all day a-drying;
With one cracked looking-glass to see your face in,
And dinner served up in a pudding basin!

A simple sailor, lowly born,
Unlettered and unknown,
Who toils for bread from early morn
Till half the night has flown!
No golden rank can he impart—
No wealth of house or land—
No fortune save his trusty heart
And honest brown right hand!
And yet he is so wondrous fair
That love for one so passing rare,
So peerless in his manly beauty,
Were little else than solemn duty!
Oh, god of love, and god of reason, say,
Which of you twain shall my poor heart obey!

Sir J. (*coming forward*). Madam, it has been represented to me that you are appalled by my exalted rank; I desire to convey to you, officially, my assurance that if your hesitation is attributable to that circumstance, it is uncalled for.

Jos. Oh! then your lordship is of opinion that married happiness is *not* inconsistent with discrepancy in rank?

Sir J. I am officially of that opinion.

Jos. That the high and the lowly may be truly happy together, provided that they truly love one another?

Sir J. Madam, I desire to convey to you, officially, my opinion that love is a platform upon which all ranks meet.

Jos. I thank you, Sir Joseph. I *did* hesitate, but I will hesitate no longer. (*Aside.*) He little thinks how eloquently he has pleaded his rival's cause!

CAPTAIN *has entered; during this speech he comes forward.*

TRIO.—SIR JOSEPH, CAPTAIN, AND JOSEPHINE.

Capt. Never mind the why and wherefore,
Love can level ranks, and therefore,
Though his lordship's station's mighty,
Though stupendous be his brain,
Though your tastes are mean and flighty
And your fortune poor and plain——
Capt. and Sir J. Ring the merry bells on board ship,
Rend the air with warbling wild,
For the union of {his / my} lordship
With a humble captain's child!
Capt. For a humble captain's daughter——
Jos. (aside). For a gallant captain's daughter——
Sir J. And a lord who rules the water——
Jos. (aside). And a *tar* who ploughs the water!
All. Let the air with joy be laden,
Rend with songs the air above,
For the union of a maiden
With the man who owns her love!

Sir J. Never mind the why and wherefore,
Love can level ranks, and therefore,
Though your nautical relation (*alluding to* CAPTAIN)
In my set could scarcely pass—
Though you occupy a station
In the lower middle class——
Capt. and Sir J. Ring the merry bells on board ship,
Rend the air with warbling wild,
For the union of {his / my} lordship
With a humble captain's child?
Sir J. For a humble captain's daughter——
Jos. (aside). For a gallant captain's daughter——
Capt. And a lord who rules the water——
Jos. (aside). And a *tar* who ploughs the water!
All. Let the air with joy be laden,
Fill with songs the air above,
For the union of a maiden
With the man who owns her love!

Jos. Never mind the why and wherefore,
Love can level ranks, and therefore
I admit its jurisdiction;
Ably have you played your part;
You have carried firm conviction
To my hesitating heart.

Capt. and Sir J. Ring the merry bells on board ship,
Rend the air with warbling wild,
For the union of {his / my} lordship
With a humble captain's child!
Capt. and Sir J. For a humble captain's daughter——
Jos. (*aside*). For a gallant captain's daughter——
Capt. and Sir J. And a lord who rules the water——
Jos. (*aside*). And a *tar* who ploughs the water!
(*Aloud.*) Let the air with joy be laden,
Capt. and Sir J. Ring the merry bells on board ship——
Jos. For the union of a maiden——
Capt. and Sir J. For the union with his lordship.
All. Rend with songs the air above
For the man who owns her love!

[*Exit* JOSEPHINE.

Capt. Sir Joseph, I cannot express to you my delight at the happy result of your eloquence. Your argument was unanswerable.

Sir J. Captain Corcoran, it is one of the happiest characteristics of this glorious country that official utterances are invariably regarded as unanswerable. [*Exit* SIR JOSEPH *into cabin.*

Capt. At last my fond hopes are to be crowned. My only daughter is to be the bride of a Cabinet Minister. The prospect is Elysian.

During this speech DICK DEADEYE *has entered.*

Dick. Captain!

Capt. Deadeye! You here? Don't! (*Recoiling from him.*)

Dick. Ah, don't shrink from me, Captain. I'm unpleasant to look at, and my name's agin me, but I ain't as bad as I seem.

Capt. What would you with me?

Dick (*mysteriously*). I'm come to give you warning.

Capt. Indeed! Do you propose to leave the Navy, then?

Dick. No, no, you misunderstand me; listen.

DUET.—CAPTAIN AND DICK DEADEYE.

Dick. Kind Captain, I've important information,
Sing hey, the kind commander that you are!
About a certain intimate relation;
Sing hey, the merry maiden and the tar!
Both. The merry maiden and the tar!

Capt. Good fellow, in conundrums you are speaking,
Sing hey, the mystic sailor that you are!
The answer to them vainly I am seeking;
Sing hey, the merry maiden and the tar!
Both. The merry maiden and the tar!

Dick. Kind Captain, your young lady is a-sighing,
Sing hey, the simple captain that you are!
This very night with Rackstraw to be flying;
Sing hey, the merry maiden and the tar!
Both. The merry maiden and the tar!

Capt. Good fellow, you have given timely warning,
Sing hey, the thoughtful sailor that you are!
I'll talk to Master Rackstraw in the morning;
Sing hey, the cat-o'-nine-tails and the tar!
(*Producing a "cat."*)
Both. The merry cat-o'-nine-tails and the tar!

Capt. Dick Deadeye, I thank you for your warning; I will at once take means to arrest their flight. This boat-cloak will afford me ample disguise. So! (*Envelopes himself in a mysterious cloak, holding it before his face.*)

Dick. Ha! ha! They are foiled—foiled—foiled!

Enter Crew *on tiptoe, with* RALPH *and* BOATSWAIN, *meeting* JOSEPHINE, *who enters from cabin on tiptoe, with bundle of necessaries, and accompanied by* LITTLE BUTTERCUP. *The* CAPTAIN, *shrouded in his boat-cloak, watches them unnoticed.*

ENSEMBLE.

Carefully on tiptoe stealing,
Breathing gently as we may,
Every step with caution feeling,
We will softly steal away.

(CAPTAIN *stamps—chord.*)

All (*much alarmed*). Goodness me!
Why, what was that?
Dick. Silent be,
It was the cat!
All (*reassured*). It was—it was the cat!
Capt. (*producing cat-o'-nine-tails*).
They're right, it was the cat!

Pull ashore, in fashion steady,
Hymen will defray the fare,
For a clergyman is ready
To unite the happy pair!

(*Stamp as before, and chord.*)

All. Goodness me!
Why, what was that?
Dick. Silent be,
Again the cat!

All. It was again that cat!
Capt. (*aside*). They're right, it was the cat!

(*Throwing off cloak.*) Hold! (*All start.*)
Pretty daughter of mine,
I insist upon knowing
Where you may be going
With these sons of the brine;
For my excellent crew,
Though foes they could thump any,
Are scarcely fit company,
My daughter, for you.
Crew. Now, hark at that, do!
Though foes we could thump any,
We are scarcely fit company
For a lady like you!

Ralph. Proud officer, that haughty lip uncurl!
Vain man, suppress that supercilious sneer,
For I have dared to love your matchless girl,
A fact well known to all my messmates here!
Capt. Oh, horror!
Ralph and Jos. { I, / He, } humble, poor, and lowly born,
The meanest in the port division—
The butt of epauletted scorn—
The mark of quarter-deck derision—
{ Have / Has } dared to raise { my / his } wormy eyes
Above the dust to which you'd mould { me, / him,
In manhood's glorious pride to rise.
{ I am / He is } an Englishman—behold { me! / him!
All. He is an Englishman!
Boat. He is an Englishman!
For he himself has said it,
And it's greatly to his credit,
That he is an Englishman!
All. That he is an Englishman!
Boat. For he might have been a Roosian,
A French, or Turk, or Proosian,
Or perhaps Itali-an!
All. Or perhaps Itali-an!
Boat. But in spite of all temptations
To belong to other nations,
He remains an Englishman!
All. Hurrah!
For the true-born Englishman!
Capt. (*trying to repress his anger*).
In uttering a reprobation
To any British tar,

I try to speak with moderation,
But you have gone too far.
I'm very sorry to disparage
A humble foremast lad,
But to seek your captain's child in marriage,
Why, damme, it's too bad!

During this COUSIN HEBE *and* Female Relatives *have entered.*

All (shocked). Oh!
Capt. Yes, damme, it's too bad!
Capt. and Dick Deadeye. Yes, damme, it's too bad.

During this SIR JOSEPH *has appeared on poop-deck. He is horrified at the bad language.*

Hebe. Did you hear him—did you hear him?
Oh, the monster overbearing!
Don't go near him—don't go near him—
He is swearing—he is swearing.
Sir J. (with impressive dignity).
My pain and my distress
I find it is not easy to express;
My amazement—my surprise—
You may learn from the expression of my eyes!
Capt. My lord, one word—the facts are known before you;
The word was injudicious, I allow—
But hear my explanation, I implore you,
And you will be indignant, too, I vow!
Sir J. I will hear of no defence,
Attempt none if you're sensible.
That word of evil sense
Is wholly indefensible.
Go, ribald, get you hence
To your cabin with celerity.
This is the consequence
Of ill-advised asperity!

[*Exit* CAPTAIN, *disgraced, followed by* JOSEPHINE.

All. Behold the consequence
Of ill-advised asperity!
Sir J. For I'll teach you all, ere long,
To refrain from language strong.
For I haven't any sympathy for ill-bred taunts!
Hebe. No more have his sisters, nor his cousins, nor his aunts.
All. For he is an Englishman, etc.

Sir J. Now, tell me, my fine fellow—for you *are* a fine fellow——

Ralph. Yes, your honour.

Sir J. How came your captain so far to forget himself? I am quite sure you had given him no cause for annoyance.

Ralph. Please your honour, it was thus wise. You see, I'm only a topman—a mere foremast hand——

Sir J. Don't be ashamed of that. Your position as a topman is a very exalted one.

Ralph. Well, your honour, love burns as brightly in the foksle as it does on the quarter-deck, and Josephine is the fairest bud that ever blossomed upon the tree of a poor fellow's wildest hopes.

Enter JOSEPHINE; *she rushes to* RALPH'S *arms.* SIR JOSEPH *horrified.*

She's the figurehead of my ship of life—the bright beacon that guides me into my port of happiness—the rarest, the purest gem that ever sparkled on a poor but worthy fellow's trusting brow.

All. Very pretty.

Sir J. Insolent sailor, you shall repent this outrage. Seize him! [*Two* Marines *seize him and handcuff him.*

Jos. Oh, Sir Joseph, spare him, for I love him tenderly.

Sir J. Away with him. I will teach this presumptuous mariner to discipline his affections. Have you such a thing as a dungeon on board?

All. We have!

Sir J. Then load him with chains and take him there at once!

OCTETTE.

Ralph. Farewell, my own!
Light of my life, farewell!
For crime unknown
I go to a dungeon cell.
All. For crime, etc.
Jos. In the mean time, farewell!
And all alone
Rejoice in your dungeon cell!
All. And all, etc.
Sir J. A bone, a bone
I'll pick with this sailor fell;
Let him be shown
At once to his dungeon cell.
All. Let him, etc.
Boat. } He'll hear no tone
Dick. } Of the maiden he loves so well!
Hebe. } No telephone
Communicates with his cell!
All. No telephone, etc.

But. (*mysteriously*). But when is known
The secret I have to tell,
Wide will be thrown
The door of his dungeon cell.
All. Wide will be thrown
The door of his dungeon cell!

[*All repeat respective verses, ensemble. At the end* RALPH *is led off in custody.*

Sir J. Josephine, I cannot tell you the distress I feel at this most painful revelation. I desire to express to you, officially, that I am hurt. You, whom I honoured by seeking in marriage—you, the daughter of a captain in the Royal Navy!

But. Hold! *I* have something to say to that?

Sir J. You?

But. Yes, I!

SONG.—BUTTERCUP.

A many years ago,
When I was young and charming,
As some of you may know
I practised baby-farming.
All. Now this is most alarming!
When she was young and charming,
She practised baby-farming,
A many years ago.
But. Two tender babes I nussed:
One was of low condition,
The other, upper crust,
A regular patrician.
All (*explaining to each other*).
Now, this is the position:
One was of low condition,
The other a patrician,
A many years ago.
But. Oh, bitter is my cup!
However could I do it?
I mixed those children up,
And not a creature knew it!
All. However could you do it?
Some day, no doubt, you'll rue it,
Although no creature knew it,
So many years ago.
But. In time each little waif
Forsook his foster-mother.
The well-born babe was Ralph—
Your captain was the other!
All. They left their foster-mother.
The one was Ralph, our brother—
Our captain was the other,
A many years ago.

Sir J. Then I am to understand that Captain Corcoran and Ralph were exchanged in childhood's happy hour—that Ralph is really the Captain, and the Captain is Ralph?

But. That is the idea I intended to convey?

Sir J. You have done it very well. Let them appear before me, at once!

RALPH *enters as Captain;* CAPTAIN *as a common sailor.* JOSEPHINE *rushes to his arms.*

Jos. My father—a common sailor!

Capt. It is hard, is it not, my dear?

Sir J. This is a very singular occurrence; I congratulate you both. (*To* RALPH.) Desire that remarkably fine seaman to step forward.

Ralph. Corcoran, come here.

Capt. If what? If you *please.*

Sir J. Perfectly right. If you *please.*

Ralph. Oh. If you *please.* [CAPTAIN *steps forward.*

Sir J. (*to* CAPTAIN). You are an extremely fine fellow.

Capt. Yes, your honour.

Sir J. So it seems that you were Ralph, and Ralph was you.

Capt. So it seems, your honour.

Sir J. Well, I need not tell you that after this change in your condition, a marriage with your daughter will be out of the question.

Capt. Don't say that, your honour—love levels all ranks.

Sir J. It does to a considerable extent, but it does not level them as much as that. (*Handing* JOSEPHINE *to* RALPH.) Here—take her, sir, and mind you treat her kindly.

Ralph and Jos. Oh, bliss! oh, rapture!
Sir J. Sad my lot, and sorry,
What shall I do? I cannot live alone!
All. What will he do? he cannot live alone!
Hebe. Fear nothing—while I live I'll not desert you.
I'll soothe and comfort your declining days.
Sir J. No, don't do that.
Hebe. Yes, but indeed I'd rather.
Sir J. (*resigned*).
To-morrow morn our vows shall all be plighted,
Three loving pairs on the same day united!

DUET.—RALPH AND JOSEPHINE.

Oh, joy! oh, rapture unforeseen!
The clouded sky is now serene;

The god of day—the orb of love,
Has hung his ensign high above,
The sky is all ablaze.

With wooing words and loving song,
We'll chase the lagging hours along;
And if { he finds / I find } the maiden coy,
We'll murmur forth decorous joy,
In dreamy roundelays.

Capt. For he is the Captain of the Pinafore.
All. And a right good captain too!
Capt. And though before my fall
I was Captain of you all,
I'm a member of the crew.
All. Although before his fall, etc.
Capt. I shall marry with a wife
In my own rank of life! (*Turning to* BUTTERCUP.)
And you, my love, are she.
I must wander to and fro,
But wherever I may go,
I shall never be untrue to thee!
All. What, never?
Capt. No, never!
All. What, *never*?
Capt. Hardly ever!
All. Hardly ever be untrue to thee.
Then give three cheers, and one cheer more,
For the faithful seamen of the Pinafore.

But. For he loves Little Buttercup, dear Little Buttercup.
I'm sure I shall never know why;
But still he loves Buttercup, poor Little Buttercup,
Sweet Little Buttercup, ay!
All. For he loves, etc.

Sir J. I'm the monarch of the sea,
And when I've married thee (*to* HEBE)
I'll be true to the devotion that my love implants.
Hebe. Then good-bye to his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts.
Especially his cousins,
Whom he reckons up by dozens,
His sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts!
All. For he is an Englishman,
And he himself hath said it,
And it's greatly to his credit
That he is an Englishman!

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE;

OR,

THE SLAVE OF DUTY.

AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL COMIC OPERA,

IN TWO ACTS.

First produced at the Opera Comique Theatre, by MR. R. D'OYLY CARTE, *on Saturday, 3rd April,* 1880.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Major-General Stanley	Mr. George Grossmith.
The Pirate King	Mr. Richard Temple.
Samuel, *his Lieutenant*	Mr. George Temple.
Frederic, *the Pirate Apprentice* ...	Mr. George Power.
Sergeant of Police	Mr. Rutland Barrington
Mabel, *General Stanley's Daughter* ...	Miss Marion Hood.
Edith	Miss Jessie Bond.
Kate	Miss Julia Gwynne.
Isabel	Miss M. Barlow.
Ruth, *a Pirate Maid of all Work* ...	Miss Alice Barnett.

Chorus of Pirates, Police, and General Stanley's Daughters.

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

OR,

THE SLAVE OF DUTY.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*A rocky sea-shore on the coast of Cornwall. Under the rock is a cavern. In the distance is a calm sea, on which a schooner is lying at anchor. As the curtain rises groups of* Pirates *are discovered—some drinking, some playing cards.* SAMUEL, *the pirate lieutenant, is going from one group to the other, filling the cups from a flask.* FREDERIC *is seated in a despondent attitude at the back of the scene.* RUTH *kneels at his feet.*

OPENING CHORUS.

Sam. Pour, oh, pour the pirate sherry;
Fill, oh, fill the pirate glass;
And, to make us more than merry,
Let the pirate bumper pass.

Solo. *Sam.* For to-day our pirate 'prentice
Rises from indenture freed;
Strong his arm and keen his scent is,
He's a pirate now indeed!

All. Here's good luck to Frederic's ventures!
Frederic's out of his indentures.

Solo. *Sam.* Two and twenty now he's rising,
And alone he's fit to fly,
Which we're bent on signalizing
With unusual revelry.

All. Here's good luck to Frederic's ventures!
Frederic's out of his indentures,
So pour, oh, pour the pirate sherry, etc.

[FREDERIC *rises and comes forward with* PIRATE KING.

King. Yes, Frederic, from to-day you rank as a full-blown member of our band.

All. Hurrah!

Fred. My friends, I thank you all, from my heart, for your kindly wishes. Would that I could repay them as they deserve!

King. What do you mean?

Fred. To-day I am out of my indentures, and to-day I leave you for ever.

King. But this is quite unaccountable; a keener hand at scuttling a Cunarder or cutting out a White Star never shipped a handspike.

Fred. Yes, I have done my best for you. And why? It was my duty under my indentures, and I am the slave of duty. As a child I was regularly apprenticed to your band. It was through an error—no matter, the mistake was ours, not yours, and I was in honour bound by it.

Sam. An error? What error?

Fred. I may not tell you; it would reflect upon my well-loved Ruth. [RUTH *comes down to* FREDERIC.

Ruth. Nay, dear master, my mind has long been gnawed by the cankering tooth of mystery. Better have it out at once.

SONG.—RUTH.

When Frederic was a little lad he proved so brave and daring,
His father thought he'd 'prentice him to some career seafaring.
I was, alas, his nursery-maid, and so it fell to *my* lot
To take and bind the promising boy apprentice to a *pilot*—
A life not bad for a hardy lad, though certainly not a high lot.
Though I'm a nurse, you might do worse than make your boy a pilot.

I was a stupid nursery-maid, on breakers always steering,
And I did not catch the word aright, through being hard of hearing;
Mistaking my instructions, which within my brain did gyrate,
I took and bound this promising boy apprentice to a *pirate*.
A sad mistake it was to make and doom him to a vile lot.
I bound him to a pirate—you—instead of to a pilot.

I soon found out, beyond all doubt, the scope of this disaster,
But I hadn't the face to return to my place, and break it to my master.
A nursery-maid is never afraid of what you people *call* work,
So I made up my mind to go as a kind of piratical maid of all work;

And that is how you find me now a member of your shy lot,
Which you wouldn't have found, had he been bound apprentice to a pilot.

(*Kneeling at his feet.*) Oh, pardon! Frederic, pardon!

Fred. Rise, sweet one; I have long pardoned you.

Ruth (*rises*). The two words were so much alike.

Fred. They were. They still are, though years have rolled over their heads. (RUTH *goes up with* SAMUEL.) But this afternoon my obligation ceases. Individually I love you all with affection unspeakable, but collectively, I look upon you with a disgust that amounts to absolute detestation. Oh! pity me, my beloved friend, for such is my sense of duty, that once out of my indentures I shall feel myself bound to devote myself heart and soul to your extermination!

All. Poor lad! poor lad! (*All weep.*)

King. Well, Frederic, if you conscientiously feel that it is your duty to destroy us, we cannot blame you for acting on that conviction. Always act in accordance with the dictates of your conscience, my boy, and chance the consequences.

Sam. Besides, we can offer you but little temptation to remain with us. We don't seem to make piracy pay. I'm sure I don't know why, but we don't.

Fred. *I* know why, but, alas! I mustn't tell you; it wouldn't be right.

King. Why not, my boy? It's only half-past eleven, and you are one of us until the clock strikes twelve.

Sam. True, and until then you are bound to protect our interests.

All. Hear, hear!

Fred. Well, then, it is my duty, as a pirate, to tell you that you are too tender-hearted. For instance, you make a point of never attacking a weaker party than yourselves, and when you attack a stronger party, you invariably get thrashed.

King. There is some truth in that.

Fred. Then, again, you make a point of never molesting an orphan!

Sam. Of course: we are orphans ourselves, and know what it is.

Fred. Yes, but it has got about, and what is the consequence? Every one we capture says he's an orphan. The last three ships we took proved to be manned entirely by orphans, and so we had to let them go. One would think that Great Britain's mercantile navy was recruited solely from her orphan asylums—which we know is not the case.

Sam. But, hang it all, you wouldn't have us absolutely merciless?

Fred. There's my difficulty; until twelve o'clock I would, after twelve I wouldn't. Was ever a man placed in so delicate a situation!

Ruth. And Ruth, your own Ruth, whom you love so well, and who has won her middle-aged way into your boyish heart, what is to become of *her*?

King. Oh, he will take you with him.

Fred. Well, Ruth, I feel some little difficulty about you. It is true that I admire you very much, but I have been constantly at sea since I was eight years old, and yours is the only woman's face I have seen during that time. I think it is a sweet face!

Ruth. It is, oh, it is!

Fred. I say I *think* it is; that is my impression. But as I have never had an opportunity of comparing you with other women, it is just possible I may be mistaken.

King. True.

Fred. What a terrible thing it would be if I were to marry this innocent person, and then find out that she is, on the whole, plain!

King. Oh, Ruth is very well, very well indeed.

Sam. Yes, there are the remains of a fine woman about Ruth.

Fred. Do you really think so? Then I will not be so selfish as to take her from you. In justice to her, and in consideration for you, I will leave her behind. (*Hands* RUTH *to* KING.)

King. No, Frederic, this must not be. We are rough men, who lead a rough life, but we are not so utterly heartless as to deprive thee of thy love. I think I am right in saying that there is not one here who would rob thee of this inestimable treasure for all the world holds dear.

All (loudly). Not one!

King. No, I thought there wasn't. Keep thy love, Frederic, keep thy love. (*Hands her back to* FREDERIC.)

Fred. You're very good, I'm sure.

King. Well, it's the top of the tide, and we must be off. Farewell, Frederic. When your process of extermination begins, let our deaths be as swift and painless as you can conveniently make them.

Fred. I will! By the love I have for you, I swear it! Would that you could render this extermination unnecessary by accompanying me back to civilization!

King. No, Frederic, it cannot be. I don't think much of our profession, but, contrasted with respectability, it is comparatively honest. No, Frederic, I shall live and die a pirate king.

SONG.—PIRATE KING.

Oh, better far to live and die
Under the brave black flag I fly,
Than play a sanctimonious part,
With a pirate head and a pirate heart.
Away to the cheating world go you,
Where pirates all are well to do;
But I'll be true to the song I sing,
And live and die a pirate king.
For I am a pirate king.

All. You are!
Hurrah for our pirate king!

King. And it is, it is a glorious thing
To be a pirate king.

All. Hurrah! (*Cheering action by* Pirates.)
Hurrah for our pirate king!

King. When I sally forth to seek my prey
I help myself in a royal way:
I sink a few more ships, it's true,
Than a well-bred monarch ought to do;
But many a king on a first-class throne,
If he wants to call his crown his own,
Must manage somehow to get through
More dirty work than ever *I* do,
Though I am a pirate king.

All. You are!
Hurrah for our pirate king!

King. And it is, it is a glorious thing
To be a pirate king!

All. It is!
Hurrah for our pirate king!

[*After song, the* KING, SAMUEL, *and all the Pirates, excepting* FREDERIC *and* RUTH, *go off;* FREDERIC *comes, followed by* RUTH.)

Ruth. Oh, take me with you! I cannot live if I am left behind.

Fred. Ruth, I will be quite candid with you: you are very dear to me, as you know, but I must be circumspect. You see, you are considerably older than I. A lad of twenty-one usually looks for a wife of seventeen.

Ruth. A wife of seventeen! You will find me a wife of a thousand!

Fred. No, but I shall find you a wife of forty-seven, and that is quite enough. Ruth, tell me candidly, and without reserve—compared with other women, how are *you?*

Ruth. I will answer you truthfully, master; I have a slight cold, but otherwise I am quite well.

Fred. I am sorry for your cold, but I was referring rather to your personal appearance. Compared with other women—are you beautiful?

Ruth (*bashfully*). I have been told so, dear master.

Fred. Ah, but lately?

Ruth. Oh no, years and years ago.

Fred. What do you think of yourself?

Ruth. It is a delicate question to answer, but I think I am a fine woman.

Fred. That is your candid opinion?

Ruth. Yes, I should be deceiving you if I told you otherwise.

Fred. Thank you, Ruth; I believe you, for I am sure you would not practise on my inexperience. I wish to do the right thing, and if—I say if—you are really a fine woman, your age shall be no obstacle to our union. (*Shakes hands with her. Chorus of* Girls *heard in the distance,* "*Climbing over rocky mountain,*" *etc. See entrance of* Girls.) Hark! Surely I hear voices! Who has ventured to approach our all but inaccessible lair? Can it be Custom House? No, it does not sound like Custom House.

Ruth (*aside*). Confusion! it is the voices of young girls! If he should see them I am lost.

Fred. (*climbing rocky arch and looking off*). By all that's marvellous, a bevy of beautiful maidens!

Ruth (*aside*). Lost! lost! lost!

Fred. How lovely! how surpassingly lovely is the plainest of them! What grace! what delicacy! what refinement! And Ruth—Ruth told me she was beautiful!

RECITATIVE.

Fred. Oh, false one, you have deceived me.
Ruth. I have deceived you?
Fred. Yes, deceived me. (*Denouncing her.*)

DUET.—FREDERIC AND RUTH.

Fred. You told me you were fair as gold!
Ruth (*wildly*). And, master, am I not so?
Fred. And now I see you're plain and old.
Ruth. I am sure I am not a jot so.

Fred. Upon my ignorance you play.
Ruth. I'm not the one to plot so.
Fred. Your face is lined, your hair is grey.
Ruth. It's gradually got so.
Fred. Faithless woman to deceive me,
I who trusted so!
Ruth. Master, master, do not leave me.
Hear me, ere you go.
My love, without reflecting,
Oh, do not be rejecting.
Take a maiden tender—her affection, raw and green,
At very highest rating,
Has been accumulating
Summers seventeen—summers seventeen.
Don't, belovèd master,
Crush me with disaster.
What is such a dower to the dower I have here?
My love, unabating,
Has been accumulating
Forty-seven year—forty-seven year!

ENSEMBLE.

RUTH.

Don't, beloved master,
Crush me with disaster.
What is such a dower to the dower
I have here, etc.

FREDERIC.

Yes, your former master
Saves you from disaster.
Your love would be uncomfortably
fervid, it is clear,
If, as you are stating,
It's been accumulating
Forty-seven year—forty-seven
year.

[*At the end he renounces her, and she goes off in despair*

RECITATIVE—FREDERIC.

What shall I do? Before these gentle maidens,
I dare not show in this detested costume.
No, better far remain in close concealment
Until I can appear in decent clothing.

[*Hides in cave as they enter, climbing over the rocks and through arched rock.*

Girls. Climbing over rocky mountain,
Skipping rivulet and fountain;
Passing where the willows quiver
By the ever-rolling river,
Swollen with the summer rain;
Threading long and leafy mazes
Dotted with unnumbered daisies;
Scaling rough and rugged passes,
Climb the hardy little lasses,
Till the bright sea-shore they gain.

Edith. Let us gaily tread the measure,
Make the most of fleeting leisure;
Hail it as a true ally
Though it perish by-and-by.
All. Hail it as a true ally
Though it perish by-and-by.
Edith. Every moment brings a treasure
Of its own especial pleasure.
Though the moments quickly die,
Greet them gaily as they fly.
Kate. Far away from toil and care,
Revelling in fresh sea air,
Here we live and reign alone
In a world that's all our own.
Here in this our rocky den,
Far away from mortal men,
We'll be queens, and make decrees;
They may honour them who please.
All. Let us gaily tread the measure, etc.

Kate. What a picturesque spot! I wonder where we are!

Edith. And I wonder where papa is. We have left him ever so far behind.

Isa. Oh, he will be here presently! Remember, poor papa is not as young as we are, and we have come over a rather difficult country.

Kate. But how thoroughly delightful it is to be so entirely alone! Why, in all probability we are the first human beings who ever set foot on this enchanting spot.

Isa. Except the mermaids—it's the very place for mermaids.

Kate. Who are only human beings down to the waist!

Edith. And who can't be said strictly to set *foot* anywhere. Tails they may, but feet they *cannot*.

Kate. But what shall we do until papa and the servants arrive with the luncheon? [*All rise and come down.*

Edith. We are quite alone, and the sea is as smooth as glass. Suppose we take off our shoes and stockings and paddle.

All. Yes, yes. The very thing!

[*They prepare to carry out the suggestion. They have all taken off one shoe, when* FREDERIC *comes forward from cave.*

RECITATIVE.

Fred. Stop, ladies, pray!
All (hopping on one foot). A man!
Fred. I had intended
Not to intrude myself upon your notice
In this effective but alarming costume,

But under these peculiar circumstances
It is my bounden duty to inform you
That your proceedings will not be unwitnessed.

Edith. But who are you, sir? Speak! (*All hopping.*)

Fred. I am a pirate.

All (*recoiling hopping*).
A pirate! Horror!

Fred. Ladies, do not shudder!
This evening I renounce my vile profession;
And to that end, oh, pure and peerless maidens!
Oh, blushing buds of ever-blooming beauty!
I, sore of heart, implore your kind assistance.

Edith. How pitiful his tale!

Kate. How rare his beauty!

All. How pitiful his tale! How rare his beauty!

[*Put on their shoes, and group in semicircle.*

SONG.—FREDERIC.

Oh! is there not one maiden breast
Which does not feel the moral beauty
Of making worldly interest
Subordinate to sense of duty?
Who would not give up willingly
All matrimonial ambition,
To rescue such a one as I
From his unfortunate position?

All. Alas! there's not one maiden breast
Which seems to feel the moral beauty
Of making worldly interest
Subordinate to sense of duty.

Fred. Oh, is there not one maiden here,
Whose homely face and bad complexion
Have caused all hopes to disappear
Of ever winning man's affection?
To such a one, if such there be,
I swear by heaven's arch above you,
If you will cast your eyes on me—
However plain you be—I'll love you!

All. Alas! there's not one maiden here,
Whose homely face and bad complexion
Have caused all hope to disappear
Of ever winning man's affection.

Fred. (*in despair*). Not one!

All. No, no—not one!

Fred. Not one?

No, no!

MABEL *enters through arch.*

Mab. Yes, one!
All. 'Tis Mabel!
Mab. Yes, 'tis Mabel!

RECITATIVE.—MABEL.

Oh, sisters, deaf to pity's name,
For shame!
It's true that he has gone astray,
But pray,
Is that a reason good and true
Why you
Should all be deaf to pity's name?
For shame!

All (aside). The question is, had he not been a thing of beauty,
Would she be swayed by quite as keen a sense of duty?

SONG.—MABEL.

Poor wandering one,
Though thou hast surely strayed,
Take heart of grace,
Thy steps retrace,
Be not afraid.
Poor wandering one,
If such poor love as mine
Can help thee find
True peace of mind—
Why, take it, it is thine!
Take heart, fair days will shine.
Take any heart—take mine.
All. Take heart; no danger lowers.
Take any heart—but ours.

[MABEL *and* FREDERIC *exit into cave and converse.* KATE *beckons her sisters, who form in a semicircle around her.*

EDITH.

What ought we to do,
Gentle sisters, pray?
Propriety, we know,
Says we ought to stay;
While sympathy exclaims,
"Free them from your tether—
Play at other games—
Leave them here together."

KATE.

Her case may, any day,
Be yours, my dear, or mine.
Let her make her hay
While the sun doth shine.
Let us compromise
(Our hearts are not of leather);
Let us shut our eyes,
And talk about the weather.

Ladies. Yes, yes; let's talk about the weather.

[EDITH, KATE, *and* Girls *retire and sit two and two, facing each other, in a line across.*

MABEL *and* FREDERIC *enter from cave.*

CHATTERING CHORUS.

How beautifully blue the sky,
The glass is rising very high,
Continue fine I hope it may,
And yet it rained but yesterday;
To-morrow it may pour again
(I hear the country wants some rain);
Yet people say, I know not why,
That we shall have a warm July.

(*During* MABEL'S *solo the* Girls *continue chatter pianissimo, but listening eagerly all the time.*

SOLO—MABEL.

Did ever maiden wake
From dream of homely duty,
To find her daylight break
With such exceeding beauty?
Did ever maiden close
Her eyes on waking sadness,
To dream of goodness knows
How much exceeding gladness?

Fred. Oh yes—ah, yes; this is exceeding gladness.

[FREDERIC *and* MABEL *turn and see that the* Girls *are listening; detected, they continue their chatter forte.*

Girls. How beautifully blue the sky, etc.

SOLO—FREDERIC.

[*During this,* Girls *continue their chatter pianissimo as before, but listening intently all the time.*

Did ever pirate roll
His soul in guilty dreaming,
And wake to find that soul
With peace and virtue beaming?
Did ever pirate loathed
Forsake his hideous mission,
To find himself betrothed
To lady of position?

Mab. Ah, yes—ah, yes; I am a lady of position.

[MABEL *and* FREDERIC *turn as before;* Girls *resume their chatter forte.*

ENSEMBLE.

MABEL.	FRED.	GIRLS.
Did ever maiden wake, etc.	Did ever pirate loathed, etc.	How beautifully blue the sky, etc.

RECITATIVE.—FRED.

Stay, we must not lose our senses;
Men who stick at no offences
Will anon be here.
Piracy their dreadful trade is;
Pray you, get you hence, young ladies,
While the coast is clear.

Girls. No, we must not lose our senses
If they stick at no offences.
Piracy their dreadful trade is—
Nice associates for young ladies!
Let us disappear.

[*During this chorus the* Pirates *have entered stealthily, and formed in a semicircle behind the* Girls. *As the* Girls *move to go off, each* Pirate *seizes a girl.* [KING *seizes* EDITH, SAMUEL *seizes* KATE.

All. Too late!
Pirates. Ha! Ha!
All. Too late!
Pir. Ha! Ha!
Ha! ha! ha! ha! Ha! ha! ha! ha!

ENSEMBLE.

(Pirates *pass in front of* Ladies.)

PIRATES.

Here's a first-rate opportunity
To get married with impunity,
And indulge in the felicity
Of unbounded domesticity.
You shall quickly be parsonified,
Conjugally matrimonified
By a doctor of divinity,
Who is located in this vicinity.

(Ladies *pass in front of* Pirates.)

LADIES.

We have missed our opportunity
Of escaping with impunity;
So farewell to the felicity
Of our maiden domesticity.
We shall quickly be parsonified,
Conjugally matrimonified
By a doctor of divinity,
Who is located in this vicinity.

RECITATIVE.—MABEL (*coming forward*).

How, monsters! Ere your pirate caravanserai
Proceed, against our will, to wed us all,
Just bear in mind that we are wards in Chancery,
And father is a major-general!

Sam. (*cowed*). We'd better pause, or danger may befall;
Their father is a major-general.

Ladies. Yes, yes; he is a major-general.

The MAJOR-GENERAL *has entered unnoticed on rock.*

Gen. Yes, I am a major-general.
All. You are!
Hurrah for the Major-General!
Gen. And it is a glorious thing
To be a major-general.
All. It is!
Hurrah for the Major-General!

SONG.—MAJOR-GENERAL.

I am the very pattern of a modern major-gineral,
I've information vegetable, animal, and mineral;
I know the kings of England, and I quote the fights historical
From Marathon to Waterloo, in order categorical;
I'm very well acquainted too with matters mathematical;
I understand equations, both the simple and quadratical;
About binomial theorem I'm teeming with a lot o' news—
(*Bothered for next rhyme.*)—Lot o' news—lot o' news—(*struck with an idea*)
With many cheerful facts about the square of the hypotenuse.
(*Joyously.*) With many cheerful facts about the square of the hypotenuse.

All. With many cheerful facts, etc.

Gen. I'm very good at integral and differential calculus;
I know the scientific names of beings animalculous.

In short, in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral,
I am the very model of a modern major-general.

All. In short, in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral,
He is the very model of a modern major-general.

Gen. I know our mythic history, King Arthur's and Sir Caradoc's,
I answer hard acrostics, I've a pretty taste for paradox,
I quote in elegiacs all the crimes of Heliogabalus,
In conics I can floor peculiarities parabolous.
I can tell undoubted Raphaels from Gerard Dows and Zoffanies;
I know the croaking chorus from the "Frogs" of Aristophanes.
Then I can hum a fugue, of which I've heard the music's din afore,
(*Bothered for next rhyme.*)—Din afore, din afore, din afore—(*struck with an idea*)
And whistle all the airs from that infernal nonsense "Pinafore."
(*Joyously.*) And whistle all the airs, etc.

All. And whistle all the airs, etc.

Gen. Then I can write a washing bill in Babylonic cuneiform,
And tell you every detail of Caractacus's uniform.
In short, in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral,
I am the very pattern of a modern major-general.

All. In short, in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral,
He is the very pattern of a modern major-general.

Gen. In fact, when I know what is meant by mamelon and ravelin,
When I can tell at sight a chassepôt rifle from a javelin,
When such affairs as sorties and surprises I'm more wary at,
And when I know precisely what is meant by commissariat,
When I have learnt what progress has been made in modern gunnery,
When I know more of tactics than a novice in a nunnery;
In short, when I've a smattering of elemental strategy,
(*Bothered for next rhyme.*)—Strategy, strategy—(*struck with an idea*)
You'll say a better major-general has never *sat* a gee—
(*Joyously.*) You'll say a better major-general has never *sat* a gee!

All. You'll say a better, etc.

Gen. For my military knowledge, though I'm plucky and adventury,
Has only been brought down to the beginning of the century,
But still in learning vegetable, animal, and mineral, etc.

All. But still in learning vegetable, animal, and mineral,
He is the very model of a modern major-general.

Gen. And now that I've introduced myself I should like to have some idea of what's going on.

Kate. Oh, papa—we——

Sam. Permit me, I'll explain in two words: we propose to marry your daughters.

Gen. Dear me!

Girls. Against our wills, papa—against our wills!

Gen. Oh, but you mustn't do that. May I ask—this is a

picturesque costume, but I'm not familiar with it—what are you?

King. We are all single gentlemen.

Gen. Yes, I gathered that—anything else?

King. No, nothing else.

Edith. Papa, don't believe them, they are pirates—the famous Pirates of Penzance!

Gen. The Pirates of Penzance? I have often heard of them.

Mab. All except this gentleman—(*indicating* FREDERICK)—who was a pirate once, but who is out of his indentures to-day, and who means to lead a blameless life evermore.

Gen. But wait a bit. I object to pirates as sons-in-law.

King. We object to major-generals as fathers-in-law. But we waive that point. We do not press it. We look over it.

Gen. (*aside*). Hah! an idea! (*Aloud.*) And do you mean to say that you would deliberately rob me of these the sole remaining props of my old age, and leave me to go through the remainder of life unfriended, unprotected, and alone?

King. Well, yes, that's the idea.

Gen. Tell me, have you ever known what it is to be an orphan?

Pirates (*disgusted*). Oh, dash it all!

King. Here we are again!

Gen. I ask you, have you ever known what it is to be an orphan?

King. Often!

Gen. Yes, orphan. Have you ever known what it is to be one?

King. I say, often.

All (*disgusted*). Often, often, often. (*Turning away.*)

Gen. I don't think we quite understand one another. I ask you, have you ever known what it is to be an orphan, and you say "orphan." As I understand you, you are merely repeating the word "orphan" to show that you understand me.

King. I didn't repeat the word often.

Gen. Pardon me, you did indeed.

King. I only repeated it once.

Gen. True, but you repeated it.

King. But not often.

Gen. Stop, I think I see where we are getting confused. When you said "orphan," did you mean "orphan"—a person who has lost his parents; or often—frequently?

King. Ah, I beg pardon, I see what you mean—frequently.

Gen. Ah, you said often—frequently.

King. No, only once.

Gen. (*irritated*). Exactly, you said often, frequently, only once.

FINALE.

RECITATIVE.—GENERAL.

Oh, men of dark and dismal fate,
Forego your cruel employ;
Have pity on my lonely state,
I am an orphan boy.
King. An orphan boy?
Gen. An orphan boy!
Pirates. How sad—an orphan boy!

SOLO.—GENERAL.

These children whom you see
Are all that I can call my own!
Pir. Poor fellow!
Gen. Take them away from me
And I shall be indeed alone.
Pir. Poor fellow!
Gen. If pity you can feel,
Leave me my sole remaining joy.
See, at your feet they kneel;
Your hearts you cannot steel
Against the sad, sad tale of the lonely orphan boy!
Pir. (*sobbing*). Poor fellow!
See, at our feet they kneel;
Our hearts we cannot steel
Against the sad, sad tale of the lonely orphan boy.
King. The orphan boy!
Sam. The orphan boy!
All. The lonely orphan boy! Poor fellow!

[GENERAL *comes down.* Principals *come down.* Ladies *rise.*

ENSEMBLE.

GENERAL.	GIRLS (*aside*).	PIRATES (*aside*).
I'm telling a terrible story,	He's telling a terrible story,	If he's telling a terrible story
But it doesn't diminish my glory;	Which will tend to diminish his glory.	He shall die by a death that is gory,
For they would have taken my daughters	Though they would have taken his daughters	One of the cruellest slaughters
Over the billowy waters,	Over the billowy waters,	That ever were known in these waters;
If I hadn't, in elegant diction,	It's easy, in elegant diction,	And we'll finish his moral affliction
Indulged in an innocent fiction;	To call it an innocent fiction;	By a very complete malediction,
Which is not in the same category	But it comes in the same category	As a compliment valedictory,
As a regular terrible story.	As a regular terrible story.	If he's telling a terrible story.

KING.

Although our dark career
Sometimes involves the crime of stealing,
We rather think that we're
Not altogether void of feeling.
Although we live by strife,
We're always sorry to begin it,
And what, we ask, is life
Without a touch of Poetry in it?

ALL (*kneeling*).

Hail, Poetry, thou heaven-born maid,
Thou gildest e'en the pirate's trade!
Hail, flowing fount of sentiment!
All hail, Divine Emollient! (*All rise.*)

KING.

You may go, for you're at liberty, our pirate rules protect you,
And honorary members of our band we do elect you.

Sam. For he is an orphan boy.
Chorus. He is an orphan boy.
Gen. And it sometimes is a useful thing
To be an orphan boy.
Chorus. It is! Hurrah for the orphan boy!
Quartette. Oh, happy day, with joyous glee
We will away and merry be!
Should it befall auspiciouslee,
My sisters all will bridesmaids be.
Chorus. Oh, happy day, with joyous glee
They will away, and merry be;
Should it befall auspiciouslee,
Our sisters all will bridesmaids be!

RUTH *enters, and comes down to* FREDERIC, *and kneels.*

Ruth. Oh, master, hear one word, I do implore you!
Remember Ruth, your Ruth, who kneels before you!

[Pirates *come in front of* Ladies.

Chorus. Yes, yes, remember Ruth who kneels before you.
Fred. (Pirates *threaten* RUTH).
Away, you did deceive me!
Chorus. Away, you did deceive him!
Ruth. Oh, do not leave me!
Chorus. Oh, do not leave her!
Fred. Away, you grieve me!

Chorus. Away, you grieve her!
Fred. I wish you'd leave me.

[FREDERIC *casts* RUTH *from him.* *Exit* RUTH.

ENSEMBLE.

Pray observe the magnanimity
We / They } display to lace and dimity;
Never was such opportunity
To get married with impunity,
But { we / they } give up the felicity
Of unbounded domesticity,
Though a doctor of divinity
Is located in this vicinity.

King. For we are all orphan boys,
All. We are,
Hurrah for the orphan boys!
Gen. And it sometimes is a useful thing
To be an orphan boy.
All. It is.
Hurrah for the orphan boy!

[Girls *and* GENERAL *go up rocks, while* Pirates *indulge in a wild dance of delight. The* GENERAL *produces a British flag, and the* PIRATE KING, *on arched rock, produces a black flag with skull and cross-bones.* *Picture.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*A ruined chapel by moonlight. Aisles divided by pillars and arches; ruined Gothic windows at back.* GENERAL STANLEY *discovered seated pensively, surrounded by his daughters.*

CHORUS.

Oh, dry the glistening tear
That dews that martial cheek;
Thy loving children hear,
In them thy comfort seek.

With sympathetic care
Their arms around thee creep,
For oh, they cannot bear
To see their father weep.

Enter MABEL.

SOLO.—MABEL.

Dear father, why leave your bed
At this untimely hour,
When happy daylight is dead,
And darksome dangers lower?
See, heaven has lit her lamp,
The midnight hour is past,
The chilly night air is damp,
And the dews are falling fast!
Dear father, why leave your bed
When happy daylight is dead?

FREDERIC *enters down aisle.*

Mab. Oh, Frederic, cannot you reconcile it with your conscience to say something that will relieve my father's sorrow?

Fred. I will try, dear Mabel. But why does he sit, night after night, in this draughty old ruin?

Gen. Why do I sit here? To escape from the pirates' clutches, I described myself as an orphan, and I am no orphan! I come here to humble myself before the tombs of my ancestors, and to implore their pardon for having brought dishonour on the family escutcheon.

Fred. But you forget, sir, you only bought the property a year ago, and the stucco in your baronial hall is scarcely dry.

Gen. Frederic, in this chapel are ancestors; you cannot deny that. With the estate, I bought the chapel and its contents. I don't know whose ancestors they *were*, but I know whose ancestors they *are*, and I shudder to think that their descendant by purchase (if I may so describe myself) should have brought disgrace upon what, I have no doubt, was an unstained escutcheon.

Fred. Be comforted. Had you not acted as you did, these reckless men would assuredly have called in the nearest clergyman, and have married your large family on the spot.

Gen. I thank you for your proffered solace, but it is unavailing. At what time does your expedition march against these scoundrels?

Fred. At eleven; and before midnight I hope to have atoned for my involuntary association with the pestilent scourges by sweeping them from the face of the earth. And then, my Mabel, you will be mine!

Gen. Are your devoted followers at hand?

Fred. They are; they only wait my orders.

RECITATIVE.—GENERAL.

Then, Frederic, let your escort lion-hearted
Be summoned to receive a general's blessing,
Ere they depart upon their dread adventure.

Fred. Dear sir, they come.

Enter Police, *marching in double file. Form in line facing audience.*

SONG—SERGEANT.

When the foeman bares his steel,
Tarantara! tarantara!
We uncomfortable feel,
Tarantara!
And we find the wisest thing,
Tarantara! tarantara!
Is to slap our chests and sing.
Tarantara!
For when threatened with emeutes,
Tarantara! tarantara!
And your heart is in your boots,
Tarantara!
There is nothing brings it round,
Tarantara! tarantara!
Like the trumpet's martial sound.
Tarantara!
Tarantara, ra-ra-ra-ra!

All. Tarantara, ra-ra-ra-ra!

Mab. Go, ye heroes, go to glory;
Though you die in combat gory
Ye shall live in song and story.
Go to immortality.
Go to death, and go to slaughter;
Die, and every Cornish daughter
With her tears your grave shall water.
Go, ye heroes; go and die.

All. Go, ye heroes; go and die.

Pol. Though to us it's evident,
Tarantara! tarantara!
These attentions are well meant,
Tarantara!

Such expressions don't appear,
Tarantara! tarantara!
Calculated men to cheer,
Tarantara!
Who are going to meet their fate
In a highly nervous state,
Tarantara!
Still to us it's evident
These attentions are well meant.
Tarantara!

Edith. Go and do your best endeavour,
And before all links we sever
We will say farewell for ever;
Go to glory and the grave.
For your foes are fierce and ruthless,
False, unmerciful, and truthless.
Young and tender, old and toothless,
All in vain their mercy crave.
All. Yes, your foes are fierce and ruthless, etc.

Serg. We observe too great a stress
On the risks that on us press,
And of reference a lack
To our chance of coming back.
Still perhaps it would be wise
Not to carp or criticise,
For it's very evident
These attentions are well meant.
All. Yes, to them it's evident
Our attentions are well meant.
Tarantara, ra-ra-ra-ra!
Go, ye heroes, go to glory, etc.

Gen. Away, away.
Pol. (*without moving*). Yes, yes, we go.
Gen. These pirates slay.
Pol. Yes, yes, we go.
Gen. Then do not stay.
Pol. We go, we go.
Gen. Then why all this delay?
Pol. All right—we go, we go.
Yes, forward on the foe,
Ho, ho! Ho, ho!
We go, we go, we go!
Tarantara-ra-ra!
Then forward on the foe!
All. Yes, forward!
Pol. Yes, forward!
Gen. Yes, but you don't go!
Pol. We go, we go, we go!
All. At last they really go—Tarantara-ra-ra!

ENSEMBLE.

CHORUS OF ALL BUT POLICE.

Go and do your best endeavour,
And before all links we sever
We will say farewell for ever;
Go to glory and the grave.
For your foes are fierce and ruthless,
False, unmerciful and truthless,
Young and tender, old and toothless,
All in vain their mercy crave.

CHORUS OF POLICE.

Such expressions don't appear,
Tarantara! tarantara!
Calculated men to cheer,
Tarantara!
Who are going to their fate,
Tarantara! tarantara!
In a highly nervous state.
Tarantara!
We observe too great a stress,
Tarantara! tarantara!
On the risks that on us press,
Tarantara!
And of reference a lack,
Tarantara! tarantara!
To our chance of coming back.
Tarantara!

[MABEL *tears herself from* FREDERIC *and exit, followed by her sisters, consoling her. The* GENERAL *and others follow the* Police *off.* FREDERIC *remains.*

RECITATIVE.—FREDERIC.

Now for the pirate's lair! Oh, joy unbounded!
Oh, sweet relief! Oh, rapture unexampled!
At last I may atone, in some slight measure,
For the repeated acts of theft and pillage
Which, at a sense of duty's stern dictation,
I, circumstance's victim, have been guilty.

[*The* PIRATE KING *and* RUTH *appear at the window armed.*

King. Young Frederic! (*Covering him with pistol.*)
Fred. Who calls?
King. Your late commander! (*Coming down.*)
Ruth. And I, your little Ruth! (*Covering him with pistol.*)
Fred. Oh, mad intruders,
How dare ye face me? Know ye not, oh rash ones,
That I have doomed you to extermination?

[KING *and* RUTH *hold a pistol to each ear*

King. Have mercy on us, hear us, ere you slaughter.
Fred. I do not think I ought to listen to you.
Yet, mercy should alloy our stern resentment,
And so I will be merciful—say on.

TRIO.—RUTH, KING, AND FRED.

When first you left our pirate fold
We tried to cheer our spirits faint,
According to our customs old,
With quips and quibbles quaint.

But all in vain the quips we heard,
We lay and sobbed upon the rocks,
Until to somebody occurred
A curious paradox.

Fred. A paradox!
King (*laughing*). A paradox.
Ruth. A most ingenious paradox.
We've quips and quibbles heard in flocks,
But none to beat this paradox!
Ha! ha! ha! ha! ho! ho! ho! ho!

King. We knew your taste for curious quips,
For cranks and contradictions queer,
And with the laughter on our lips,
We wished you had been there to hear.
We said, "If we could tell it him,
How Frederic would the joke enjoy,"
And so we've risked both life and limb
To tell it to our boy.
Fred. (*interested*). That paradox? That paradox!
King and Ruth (*laughing*). That most ingenious parodox!
We've quips and quibbles heard in flocks,
But none to beat that paradox!
Ha, ha, ha, ha! ho, ho, ho, ho!

CHANT.—KING.

For some ridiculous reason, to which, however, I've no desire to be disloyal,
Some person in authority, I don't know who—very likely the Astronomer Royal—
Has decided that, although for such a beastly month as February twenty-eight days as a general rule are plenty,
One year in every four his days shall be reckoned as nine and twenty.
Through some singular coincidence—I shouldn't be surprised if it were owing to the agency of an ill-natured fairy—
You are the victim of this clumsy arrangement, having been born in leap year, on the twenty-ninth of February,
And so, by a simple arithmetical process, you'll easily discover,
That though you've lived twenty-one years, yet, if we go by birthdays, you're only five and a little bit over!

Ruth. Ha! ha! ha! ha!
King. Ho! ho! ho! ho!
Fred. Dear me!
Let's see! (*Counting on fingers.*)
Yes, yes; with yours my figures do agree!

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho, ho! (FREDERIC *more amused than any.*)

Fred. How quaint the ways of paradox!
At common sense she gaily mocks!

Though counting in the usual way,
Years twenty-one I've been alive,
Yet, reckoning by my natal day,
I am a little boy of five!

All. He is a little boy of five. Ha, ha!
At common sense she gaily mocks;
So quaint a way is paradox.

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha!
King. Ho, ho, ho, ho!
Ruth. Ha, ha, ha, ha!
Fred. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

All. Ho, ho, ho, ho!

[RUTH *and* KING *throw themselves back on seats, exhausted with laughter.*]

Fred. Upon my word, this is most curious—most absurdly whimsical. Five and a quarter! No one would think it to look at me.

Ruth. You are glad now, I'll be bound, that you spared us. You would never have forgiven yourself when you discovered that you had killed *two of your comrades.*

Fred. My comrades?

King. I'm afraid you don't appreciate the delicacy of your position. You were apprenticed to us——

Fred. Until I reached my twenty-first year.

King. No, until you reached your twenty-first *birthday* (*producing document*), and, going by birthdays, you are as yet only five and a quarter.

Fred. You don't mean to say you are going to hold me to that?

King. No, we merely remind you of the fact, and leave the rest to your sense of duty.

Fred. (*wildly*). Don't put it on that footing! As I was merciful to you just now, be merciful to me! I implore you not to insist on the letter of your bond just as the cup of happiness is at my lips!

Ruth. We insist on nothing; we content ourselves with pointing out to you *your duty.*

Fred. (*after a pause*). Well, you have appealed to my sense of duty, and my duty is only too clear. I abhor your infamous calling; I shudder at the thought that I have ever been mixed up with it; but duty is before all—at any price I will do my duty!

King. Bravely spoken. Come, you are one of us once more.

Fred. Lead on; I follow. (*Suddenly.*) Oh, horror!

King and Ruth. What is the matter?

Fred. Ought I to tell you? No, no, I cannot do it; and yet, as one of your band——

King. Speak out, I charge you, by that sense of conscientiousness to which we have never yet appealed in vain.

Fred. General Stanley, the father of my Mabel——

King and Ruth. Yes, yes!

Fred. He escaped from you on the plea that he was an orphan?

King. He did.

Fred. It breaks my heart to betray the honoured father of the girl I adore, but, as your apprentice, I have no alternative. It is my duty to tell you that General Stanley is no orphan.

King and Ruth. What!

Fred. More than that, he never was one!

King. Am I to understand that, to save his contemptible life, he dared to practise on our credulous simplicity? (FREDERIC *nods as he weeps.*) Our revenge shall be swift and terrible. We will go and collect our band and attack Tremorden Castle this very night.

Fred. But——

King. Not a word. He is doomed. (*Goes up and down stage.*)

TRIO.

KING AND RUTH.	FREDERIC.
Away, away, my heart's on fire, I burn this base deception to repay, This very day my vengeance dire Shall glut itself in gore. Away, away!	Away, away, ere I expire— I find my duty hard to do to-day! My heart is filled with anguish dire, It strikes me to the core. Away, away!

King. With falsehood foul
He tricked us of our brides.
Let vengeance howl;
The pirate so decides.
Our nature stern
He softened with his lies,
And, in return,
To-night the traitor dies.

All. Yes, yes; to-night the traitor dies.

Ruth (*crosses to* FREDERIC). To-night he dies.

King. Yes, or early to-morrow.

Fred. His girls likewise?

Ruth. They will welter in sorrow.

King. The one soft spot——
Fred. In their natures they cherish,
And all who plot——
Ruth. To abuse it shall perish!
All. Yes, all who plot
King. To abuse it shall perish!
Away, away, etc.

[*Exeunt* KING *and* RUTH. FREDERIC *throws himself on a stone in blank despair.*

Enter MABEL.

RECITATIVE.—MABEL.

All is prepared, your gallant crew await you.
My Frederick in tears? It cannot be
That lion-heart quails at the coming conflict?
Fred. No, Mabel, no. A terrible disclosure
Has just been made! Mabel, my dearly loved one,
I bound myself to serve the pirate captain
Until I reached my one and twentieth birthday——
Mab. But you are twenty-one?
Fred. I've just discovered
That I was born in leap year, and that birthday
Will not be reached by me till 1940.
Mab. Oh, horrible! catastrophe appalling!
Fred. And so, farewell!
Mab. No, no! Oh, Frederic, hear me.

DUET.—MABEL AND FREDERIC.

Mab. Stay, Frederic, stay!
They have no legal claim;
No shadow of a shame
Will fall upon thy name.
Stay, Frederic, stay!
Fred. Nay, Mabel, nay,
To-night I quit these walls.
The thought my soul appals.
But when stern duty calls,
I must obey.
Mab. Stay, Frederic, stay——
Fred. Nay, Mabel, nay——
Mab. They have no claim——
Fred. But duty's name!
The thought my soul appals,
But when stern duty calls,
I must obey.

BALLAD.—MABEL (*kneels*).

Oh, leave me not to pine
Alone and desolate;
No fate seemed fair as mine,
No happiness so great.
And nature, day by day,
Has sung, in accents clear,
This joyous roundelay,
"He loves thee—he is here.
Fal-la, fa-la, fa-la."

Fred. Ah, must I leave thee here
In endless night to dream,
Where joy is dark and drear,
And sorrow all supreme!
Where nature, day by day,
Will sing, in altered tone,
This weary roundelay,
"He loves thee—he is gone.
Fa-la, fa-la, fa-la."
He loves thee, he is gone. (*Rises.*)

Fred. In 1940 I of age shall be.
I'll then return, and claim you—I declare it.
Mab. It seems so long!
Fred. Swear that, till then, you will be true to me.
Mab. Yes, I'll be strong!
By all the Stanleys dead and gone,
I swear it!

ENSEMBLE.

Oh, here is love, and here is truth,
And here is food for joyous laughter.
{He / She} will be faithful to {his / her} sooth
Till we are wed, and even after.
What joy to know that though {he / I} must
Embrace piratical adventures,
{He / She} will be faithful to {his / her} trust
Till {he is / I am} out of {his / my} indentures.

Fred. Farewell! Adieu!
Both. Farewell! Adieu!

[FREDERIC *rushes to window and leaps out.*

Mab. (*feeling pulse*).
Yes, I am brave! Oh, family descent,
How great thy charm, thy sway how excellent!
Come, one and all, undaunted men in blue;
A crisis, now, affairs are coming to.

Enter Police, *marching in single file.*

Serg. Though in body and in mind,
Tarantara! tarantara!
We are timidly inclined,
Tarantara!
And anything but blind,
Tarantara! tarantara!
To the danger that's behind,
Tarantara!
Yet, when the danger's near,
Tarantara! tarantara!
We manage to appear
Tarantara!
As insensible to fear
As anybody here.
Tarantara!
Tarantara! tarantara, ra—ra—ra—ra!

Mab. Sergeant, approach. Young Frederic was to have led you to death and glory.

All. That is not a pleasant way of putting it.

Mab. No matter; he will not so lead you, for he has allied himself once more with his old associates.

All. He has acted shamefully.

Mab. You speak falsely. You know nothing about it. He has acted nobly.

All. He has acted nobly.

Mab. Dearly as I loved him before, his heroic sacrifice to his sense of duty has endeared him to me tenfold. He has done his duty. I will do mine. Go ye, and do yours. [*Exit* MABEL.

All. Very well.

Serg. This is perplexing.

All. We cannot understand it at all.

Serg. Still he is actuated by a sense of duty——

All. That makes a difference, of course. At the same time we repeat, we cannot understand it at all.

Serg. No matter; our course is clear. We must do our best to capture these pirates alone. It is most distressing to us to be the agents whereby our erring fellow-creatures are deprived of that liberty which is so dear to all—but we should have thought of that before we joined the force.

All. We should.

Serg. It is too late now!

All. It is.

SONG.—SERGEANT.

When a felon's not engaged in his employment—
All. His employment,
Or maturing his felonious little plans—
All. Little plans,
Serg. His capacity for innocent enjoyment—
All. 'Cent enjoyment,
Serg. Is just as great as any honest man's—
All. Honest man's.
Serg. Our feelings we with difficulty smother—
All. 'Culty smother,
Serg. When constabulary duty's to be done—
All. To be done,
Serg. Ah, take one consideration with another—
All. With another,
Serg. A policeman's lot is not a happy one.
All. When constabulary duty's to be done,
The policeman's lot is not a happy one.

Serg. When the enterprising burglar's not a-burgling—
All. Not a-burgling,
Serg. When the cut-throat isn't occupied in crime—
All. 'Pied in crime,
Serg. He loves to hear the little brook a-gurgling—
All. Brook a-gurgling,
Serg. And listen to the merry village chime—
All. Village chime.
Serg. When the coster's finished jumping on his mother—
All. On his mother,
Serg. He loves to lie a-basking in the sun—
All. In the sun.
Serg. Ah, take one consideration with another—
All. With another,
Serg. The policeman's lot is not a happy one.
When constabulary duty's to be done—
To be done,
The policeman's lot is not a happy one—
Happy one.

CHORUS OF PIRATES (*without, in the distance*).

A rollicking band of pirates we,
Who, tired of tossing on the sea,
Are trying their hands in a burglaree,
With weapons grim and gory.

Serg. Hush, hush! I hear them on the manor poaching;
With stealthy step the pirates are approaching.

CHORUS OF PIRATES (*resumed nearer*).

We are not coming for plate of gold—
A story General Stanley's told—
We seek a penalty fifty-fold
For General Stanley's story.

Pol. They seek a penalty—
Pir. (*without*). Fifty-fold;
We seek a penalty—
Pol. Fifty-fold;
All. { We / They } seek a penalty fifty-fold
For General Stanley's story.
Pol. They come in force, with stealthy stride,
Our obvious course is now—to hide.

[Police *conceal themselves in aisle. As they do so, the* Pirates, *with* RUTH *and* FREDERIC, *are seen appearing at ruined window. They enter cautiously.* SAMUEL *is laden with burglarious tools and pistols, etc.*

CHORUS.—PIRATES (*very loud*).
With cat-like tread,
Upon our prey we steal;
In silence dread
Our cautious way we feel.
Pol. (*pianissimo*). Tarantara! tarantara!
Pir. No sound at all,
We never speak a word,
A fly's foot-fall
Could be distinctly heard—
Pol. Tarantara! tarantara!
Pir. Ha! ha!
Ho! ho!
So stealthily the pirate creeps
While all the household soundly sleeps.
Ha! ha! ho! ho!
Pol. (*pianissimo*). Tarantara! tarantara!
(*Forte.*) Tarantara!
Sam. (*distributing implements to various members of the gang*).
Here's your crowbar and your centrebit,
Your life preserver—you may want to hit;
Your silent matches, your dark lantern seize,
Take your file and your skeletonic keys.
All (*fortissimo*). With cat-like tread, etc.

RECITATIVE.

Fred. Hush, not a word. I see a light inside.
The Major-General comes, so quickly hide.
Gen. (*without*).
Yes, yes, the Major-General comes.
Pir. He comes.
Gen. (*entering in dressing-gown, carrying a light*).
Yes, yes, I come.
Pol. He comes.
Gen. Yes, yes, I come.
All. The Major-General comes. [*Exit* FREDERIC.

SOLO.—GENERAL.

Tormented with the anguish dread
Of falsehood unatoned,
I lay upon my sleepless bed,
And tossed and turned and groaned.
The man who finds his conscience ache
No peace at all enjoys,
And as I lay in bed awake
I thought I heard a noise.

Pir. He thought he heard a noise—ha! ha!
Pol. He thought he heard a noise—ha! ha! (*Very loud.*)
Gen. No, all is still
In dale, on hill;
My mind is set at ease.
So still the scene—
It must have been
The sighing of the breeze.

BALLAD.—GENERAL.

Sighing softly to the river
Comes the loving breeze,
Setting nature all a-quiver,
Rustling through the trees—
All. Through the trees.
Gen. And the brook in rippling measure
Laughs for very love,
While the poplars, in their pleasure,
Wave their arms above. (*Goes up stage and returns.*)
Pol. and Pir. Yes, the trees, for very love,
Wave their leafy arms above,
River, river, little river,
May thy loving prosper ever.
Heaven speed thee, poplar tree;
May thy wooing happy be.

Gen. Yet, the breeze is but a rover;
When he wings away,
Brook and poplar mourn a lover!
Sighing well-a-day!
All. Well-a-day!
Gen. Ah, the doing and undoing
That the rogue could tell!
When the breeze is out a-wooing,
Who can woo so well?
Pol. and Pir. Shocking tales the rogue could tell,
Nobody can woo so well.
Pretty brook, thy dream is over,
For thy love is but a rover
Sad the lot of poplar trees
Courted by the fickle breeze.

Enter the GENERAL'S *daughters, all in white peignoirs and nightcaps, and carrying lighted candles.*

Girls. Now, what is this, and what is that, and why does father leave his rest
At such a time as this, so very incompletely dressed?
Dear father is, and always was, the most methodical of men;
It's his invariable rule to go to bed at half-past ten.
What strange occurrence can it be that calls dear father from his rest
At such a time of night as this, so very incompletely dressed?

King (*springing up*).
Forward, my men, and seize that General there!
[*They seize the* GENERAL.

Pir. Ha! ha! we are the pirates, so despair—

King. With base deceit
You worked upon our feelings
Revenge is sweet,
And flavours all our dealings.
With courage rare
And resolution manly,
For death prepare,
Unhappy General Stanley!

Fred. (*coming forward*).
Alas, alas, unhappy General Stanley!

Gen. Frederic here! Oh, joy! Oh, rapture!
Summon your men and effect their capture.

Mab. Frederic, save us!

Fred. Beautiful Mabel,
I would if I could, but I am not able.

Pir. He's telling the truth, he is not able.

Pol. (*pianissimo*). Tarantara! tarantara.

Mab. (*wildly*). Is he to die, unshriven—unannealed?

Girls. Oh, spare him!

Mab. Will no one in his cause a weapon wield?

Girls. Oh, spare him!

Pol. (*springing up*).
Yes, we are here, though hitherto concealed!

Girls. Oh, rapture!

Pol. So to our prowess, pirates, quickly yield!

Girls. Oh, rapture!

[*A struggle ensues between* Pirates *and* Police. *Eventually the* Police *are overcome, and fall prostrate, the* Pirates *standing over them with drawn swords.* Ladies *run down.*

CHORUS OF POLICE AND PIRATES.

You / We } triumph now, for well we trow
Our mortal career's cut short,
No pirate band will take its stand
At the Central Criminal Court.

Serg. To gain a brief advantage you've contrived,
But your proud triumph will not be long-lived.
King. Don't say you are orphans, for we know that game.
Serg. On your allegiance we've a nobler claim.
We charge you yield, in Queen Victoria's name!
King (baffled). You do!
Pol. We do;
We charge you yield, in Queen Victoria's name!
[Pirates *kneel*, Police *stand over them triumphantly.*
King. We yield at once, with humbled mien,
Because, with all our faults, we love our Queen,
Pol. Yes, yes; with all their faults, they love their Queen.
Ladies. Yes, yes; with all, etc.
[Police, *holding* Pirates *by the collar, take out handkerchiefs and weep.*

RUTH *enters.*

Gen. Away with them, and place them at the bar.
Ruth. One moment; let me tell you who they are.
They are no members of the common throng;
They are all noblemen, who have gone wrong!
Gen., Pol., and Girls. What, *all* noblemen?
King and Pir. Yes, all noblemen!
Gen., Pol., and Girls. What, *all*?
King. Well, nearly all!
Gen. No Englishmen unmoved that statement hears.
Because, with all our faults, we love our House of Peers.
[*All kneel to* Pirates.

RECITATIVE.—GENERAL.

I pray you, pardon me, ex-Pirate King,
Peers will be peers, and youth will have its fling.
Resume your ranks and legislative duties,
And take my daughters, all of whom are beauties.

FINALE.

Mab. Poor wandering ones,
Though ye have surely strayed,
Take heart of grace,
Your steps retrace,
Poor wandering ones!

Poor wandering ones,
If such poor love as ours
Can help you find
True peace of mind,
Why, take it, it is yours!
All. Poor wandering ones, etc.

THE END.

PRINTED IN ENGLAND BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

C
W